

Christianity
and the
Nineteenth Century

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D.D., LL.D.*

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I

THE CZAR, THE POPE, AND THE PEOPLE

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE CZAR

JOSEPH DE MAISTRE, whose residence at St. Petersburg and intimacy with the notables of Russia gave him unusual opportunities to study the Holy Orthodox Church, delivered himself haughtily of this bold prediction : " Our languages and our sciences will penetrate finally the Greek Churches, and we shall see them run through, only with a greater velocity, all the phases of dissolution that Protestantism has undergone before our eyes. The changes that I foretell will begin with the clergy ; and the Russian Church will be the first to present that great and interesting spectacle, because it is most exposed to the European Wind. . . . If events shall contradict me, I invoke upon my memory the contempt and derision of posterity."

Eighty years and more have elapsed since the daring ultramontanist published his dazzling treatise on *The Pope*.

He is too little read to be much laughed at now. He has escaped derision by passing into oblivion. But how hollow rings the prophecy in our modern atmosphere ! The Turk has dwindled ; the Muscovite has expanded. The Moham-medan cruelty remains ; the Mohammedan menace is gone, apparently for ever. The Slav overshadows the North like a glowing cloud ; he moves in the Orient, an ever-present threat. But the Russian priesthood remains unperturbed by the European wind. The Christianity of Nicholas II. differs slightly indeed from that of Nicholas I., and the policy of Pobiedonotseff—the policy of “thorough,” the policy of abject conformity—offers little prospect of that great and interesting spectacle over which de Maistre gloated. The Christianity of Russia is still a Christianity of inarticulate scripture, torpid preachers, and reiterated creeds, of pictures, images, and bells, candles, music, and processions, fastened upon a vast population by habit and the police.

Björnson, the Norwegian poet, has pictured in strong words the Slavonic genius for passive endurance, contrasting it with that Bersekir rage of Goth and Saxon which not only makes tyranny dangerous to the oppressor, but also crushes the organized shapes in which it appears. Goth and Saxon are not long-suffering peoples ; a policy of “thorough” among them multiplies resistance and develops the political genius that it seeks to exterminate. But in Russia the case is different. There resistance is passive, or, at most, convulsive. The literature and sciences of Europe—the wind from the West—have not affected the priesthood, as de Maistre expected. So far as they have affected Russia at all, they have affected only literature

and art and the teaching of the universities. The hierarchy is unprogressive, immobile, almost petrified. There are, however, two striking testimonies to the persistence of a living Christian faith among the Russians :

1. When the Church is assailed by anarchists like Bakounine, vital Christian doctrines are selected for attack. This is a confession that the strength of the Church with the people is derived from her imperishable principles.

2. When Russian life is depicted by great writers like Tourguénief and Tolstoi, the influence of faith and prayer is frankly conceded ; Tolstoi, especially, affirming that the best souls in Russia are the simply pious ones.

The persistence of this simple piety among the people, and its probable existence in many a priestly conscience, are the chief grounds of hope for that *HEREAFTER* with which Stanley consoled himself in closing the *History of the Eastern Church*. Such a piety, combining with the Russian realism that has stirred so profoundly the Western world, may at last obtain free course. For this Russian realism, though full of contradictions, is deeply and pathetically ethical. It is at once revolutionary and submissive, sympathetic and impotent. It fills the air with its outcry against the oppressor ; it depicts with distressing fidelity the actual world, torturing the heart with its shuddering recognition of human misery ; it reveals a sensitiveness to suffering—especially the suffering caused by sin—unexampled in literature. But it cannot organize relief. It seizes eagerly the ideas of the West, only to grow weary of them or to rebel at their consequences. It seems to be something wholly apart from the active, aggressive, merciless government that drives it into exile. And it is in singular contrast to

the venerable, immobile, sterile orthodoxy at the base of which it raves. Yet it creates in those who study it the sense of some great change impending.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE POPE

The vicissitudes of the Papacy during the nineteenth century have been dramatic. The *concordat* between Pius VII. and Napoleon Bonaparte gave to the Corsican conqueror the coveted vial of consecrating oil, and restored to the Vatican a fragment of the authority shattered by the Revolution. Neapolitans, Frenchmen, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant allies returned to St. Peter his slippery patrimony, to be kept, however, only for a season. The Italian unity, which the popes had prevented for centuries, was completed in the Eternal City amid the dying echoes of the council that decreed the infallibility of Rome's imprisoned bishop. The Jesuits, sheltered during their feigned sepulture by orthodox Russia and heretic Prussia, recovered consciousness and power; *Il Papa Nero* came out of hiding to re-establish his influence with the head of the Church, and to attempt again the control of nations and of posterity. Pius VII. imprisoned by Napoleon and restored to liberty and to Rome by Protestant arms; Pius IX. fleeing from his own reforms and reinstated by the third Napoleon; Leo XIII. eager to regain the temporal sovereignty, without which the curial chieftain poses as a crippled captive,—these are the shadows of Gregory VII. and Innocent III. Could there be a sublimer paradox?—Infallible sovereignty stripped of its temporal dignity and territory! The vicar of God on earth lifting his voice

against the eternal fitness of things, as revealed in the inexpugnable instinct of the Western races for political unity and political freedom ! And yet they mistake the situation, surely, who regard the Papacy as much weakened by the events of the century. Power it has certainly lost. The priests of Italy wield little political authority as compared with the days of the Holy Alliance ; and the Latin Church shares the deterioration of the Latin races, for which she is so largely responsible. But her gains in Germany, in England, and in the United States promise her a splendid compensation. When the Pope turned a deaf ear to Lamennais and Lacordaire he missed a golden opportunity in France ; the ultramontane policy in Spain and in Italy has been blundering and unprofitable wickedness ; the moral debility of the priesthood in Mediterranean regions is painfully apparent. And yet in all these countries one discovers a remnant clustered round the cross. Many of the noblest in France, Spain, and Italy cling to the ancient order as the only refuge from atheism and despair. The Russian absolutism, with the policy of "thorough," may succeed in crushing or in crippling the awakened Slavonic intellect. But the papal absolutism failed to do this for the Latin races. The Inquisition perished. The laity, "the natural enemies of the priesthood," have conquered the wealth and the governmental machinery of the Mediterranean world. Yet the hierarchy remains ; an organized ambition, a colossal craft, mighty in the traditions and the accumulated reverence of centuries ; strengthened rather than weakened by the compulsion of the new environment. The former policy was a failure and a folly. The ghosts of Galileo and of Bruno bear

perpetual witness against it. A chastened Vatican acquiesces reluctantly in the propagation of theories which in earlier days provoked the brand of the Inquisition. And it is only judicial blindness which makes *Il Papa Re* the victim of his fixed idea, "the temporal sovereignty must be restored." For in modern Italy the popular discontent assails the monarchy rather than the priesthood, and in France the republic rather than the Church. The old hostility is disappearing, and the Pope is clothed by the imagination of the ignorant in both countries with the glory of a past that was never present. A serious science, absorbed in discovery and in the search for power, is contented if it be not attacked. A scoffing literature, to be sure, and a socialistic propaganda have reached the common people. But the superstitious masses in the Latin countries have not abandoned the hierarchy; they revile or adore, assail or defend it, as the impulse urges them. Neither have the intelligent all abandoned it. Manzoni and Montalembert, Mazzini and Lacordaire, are not without posterity. Groups of idealists appear continually, heralding or demanding a catholic Church divine which shall consecrate the tendencies of modern humanity and serve as the instrument of social transformation. The Papacy yields to these new surroundings only as a mighty steamship yields to the waves through which it drives, buoyed up by the forces that resist it, and propelled to its purpose by energies distilled from the encountered and opposing billows.

Nevertheless, Father Hecker, whose writings have caused the French Ultramontanes so much perplexity, was doubtless correct in his view that the future of the Papacy lies with the Teutonic peoples. If, he main-

tained, the Church is to regain her old ascendancy, even among the races of the Mediterranean, it will be through the conquest of England, Germany, and North America. And certainly the changed aspect of the Protestant world is a striking feature of the present era. Imagine someone predicting to Edmund Burke that one consequence of the French Revolution would be the making of cardinals out of Oxford graduates! that one of the results of American independence would be to give the Pope more adherents in North America than he had in Ireland, twice over! Or imagine someone suggesting to Frederic the Great that the ablest statesman of nineteenth-century Germany would succumb to the strength and subtlety of the Catholic remnant in Prussia! What seemed impossible to sage and statesman in the eighteenth century is a commonplace of contemporary history. And the reasons are not far to seek. On the one hand, the rising tide of democracy swept before it the ancient dikes of proscription, and Catholic emancipation came along with the flood. On the other hand, the Romanizing elements latent in the Anglican priesthood developed rapidly in the presence of a menacing Liberalism. The declarations of Keble and Newman and the latter's contrast of himself with Lacordaire are full of significance. Evidently the search was not at all for primitive Christianity, but for a means of safety, a theory by which to save the Church of England from her foes. And in discovering what seemed to him a mode of rescue for the Church of England Newman discovered himself. He was a Catholic, to his own surprise, and belonged to Rome. "Lacordaire and I were both of us inconsistent: he, a Catholic, in calling himself a Liberal; I, a Protestant, in

being an anti-Liberal." "My battle was with Liberalism; by Liberalism I mean the anti-dogmatic principle and its development." These statements are fraught with the gravest import; for there is a multitude who, like Newman, fancy themselves Protestants, and yet cannot rest without an external, visible, audible incarnation of the dogmatic principle—unique, venerable, ancient, majestic, infallible. Add to these another multitude,—the company of which Frederic Schlegel and Peter Cornelius are conspicuous examples; attracted not by the dogmatic principle, as Newman was, but by the enchantment of ceremonial. The restless, subtle, prolific intellect, oscillating between contradictory propositions, or self-expelled from its chosen strongholds, hungers for external dogma. But the perturbed emotions seek tranquillity; they are solaced and solemnized by chant and song, by swinging censer and priestly pomp, by sculptured and painted image, the musical murmur of unintelligible prayer, and the elevated mystery that awes the senses and overwhelms the intellect. Minds like Newman's are quite numerous, but they are few in comparison with those who seek escape from the individual activity of the soul in its relations with God upon which Wesley and Luther and Paul and Jesus insisted. Both these classes gravitate towards Rome,—those who accept God only when He appears fastened to a Church, like a sun moving through a solid sky, without which He would rush away into the eternal dark; and those who worship God only when they can participate passively in a recognition of His presence where chant and ceremony satisfy the senses and pacify the heart, without quickening the conscience or imposing any burdens upon the mind.

There is a third class, of which the Roman Catholics in America are the conspicuous instance—the inheritors of an ecclesiastical loyalty, who are preserving it under new conditions. The few descendants of the Maryland Catholics could hardly have developed into the vast and powerful American mission (for it is still a mission) without the sheltering tolerance of the Federal Constitution and the unexampled generosity of the native-born citizens of the Union to the European immigrant. They exacted no religious test, but clothed the new-comer speedily with political power; they gave him a homestead, if he asked it, and they made rich grants of property directly or indirectly to the authorities of his Church. And in spite of adverse influences—conspicuously the free school, the free pulpits of an active Protestantism, and the free discussion of religious questions, which is the indestructible habit of the American mind—the Catholic immigrants and their children are for the most part faithful to the Virgin and the Pope. There are, to be sure, signs of forces that tend to transform the thought and conduct of the priesthood and laity. The continued pressure of an atmosphere charged with liberating influences neutralizes for the clergy the deadening effects of their education; the absorption of men like the Paulist Fathers has its advantages for the Church, but also for the truth; and a feeling among the laity that priestly functions require for their performance saintly men sustains and elevates the standard of ethical and spiritual character for the whole American hierarchy.

It would seem, therefore, as though the Roman Catholic Church might look forward with complacency to the issues of the twentieth century. True, the Vatican decrees of

the nineteenth century have erected for science a sign of "no thoroughfare." True, also, the breach between Rome and all other ecclesiastical organizations is wider than ever, as Mr. Gladstone confessed with grief and chagrin. And surely writers like Mallock and Sidgwick are absurd in contending that the dogmatic position of Rome is more defensible than that of Protestantism. Do not the decrees of the infallible popes constitute a book? And how is it easier to defend the ancient scriptures plus those papal scriptures than to defend the Bible alone? The strength of Rome lies, not in her dogmatic position, but where de Maistre placed it—in her absolutism, in the inflexible daring with which she applies the principle of sovereignty. "Abandon liberty all ye that enter here" is the inscription above her gateway. The papal government claims, in the name of Jesus Christ, the allegiance of every human being. It creates an intellectual desert and calls it belief. None can say, therefore, whether the dream of Father Hecker will be realized; a dream in which Cardinal Newman found some consolation—witness the letters to his nephew Mozley. Hecker and Newman were Protestants originally, and both were Anglo-Saxons. They naturally hoped great things for Rome from the reinfusion of Teutonic blood; so difficult is it to escape the delusion that carried Melancthon to the conference at Ratisbon, so slow are men to perceive that the differences between Rome and the other forms of Christianity are not differences of fundamental dogma mainly, but questions of sovereignty. Accept her chief dogmas and deny her jurisdiction; she is still implacable. A gradual approximation to her dogma and her ritual makes it, of course, much easier to accept her authority,

and a reinfusion of Teutonic blood might temper her tyranny; but it would more probably lead to a second Reformation. Bismarck's epigram depicts the Teutonic character: "Every German would have a king of his own if he could afford him." "Loyalty and liberty," this is the paradox of Teutonic history, illustrated by centuries of struggle. There must be leaders, there must be discipline, there must be organization: these are axioms of the Saxon races. But they must exist to promote liberty, and not to destroy it; to enlarge our souls, and not to cripple them. Hence there is no extravagance of devotion to which the English-speaking peoples will not go in their loyalty to those who defend their liberty while wielding their authority. But this the Papacy has never learned. The Papacy is, in fact, the last stronghold of the absolutism that has been repudiated everywhere else in the Western world. Nevertheless the fact remains, and its gravity must be pondered. The ecclesiastical system which at the beginning of the century seemed about to perish because of the impoverished blood of the Latin races stands now erect and majestic, its energies renewed and its hopes restored by an inflow of Germanic, English, and American virtue, while the transformed Catholicism of which Matthew Arnold prattled has been postponed to the Greek Kalends.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE PEOPLE

Humanity is never pliant enough for absolutism. Even where the soul's salvation seems at stake, it resists it, first passively and then actively. There has been, therefore, within the ancient Churches a faithful remnant that

preserved the primitive belief and sympathized quietly with the aggressive dissent of those that were driven into exile. Thus in the Holy Orthodox Church, of which the Czar is the sovereign, there are priests and laymen who cherish a simple Christianity of prayer and love which is diffused from generation to generation, and reveals the beauty of Christ in many a Russian household. These disciples have no genius for warfare; they serve God noiselessly. Planted amid sterile surroundings, they have indeed a stunted growth; but they live and put forth leaves and bear precious fruit. The same is true of the Latin Church, though to a greater degree. The company of true believers is larger, if not nobler. Occasionally a member of it is goaded to an outcry. We become aware of a martyr priest like the German, Sailer, or of a patriot saint like the Italian, Silvio Pellico. But it does not often happen, because this remnant works and suffers for the most part in silence. It accepts humbly whatever nourishment for brain and heart it can find in its surroundings; it derives life unconsciously from the tumultuous outside world of thought and aspiration, but is sustained and enriched mainly from the truth that can be adulterated yet not destroyed. For this is the glory of a written revelation. It can never be disavowed by the organizations that derived their being from it. They may obscure it by tradition and interpretation, but they may not reject it or destroy it; and so long as they are compelled to carry it and assert its validity they carry with them the germs of an eternal life that spring up wherever there is congenial soil.

So much for the Christianity of the people within these colossal organizations. Outside of them, however, there

is a Christianity of the people of an antagonistic kind. There are the numerous dissenters of Russia, there are the Protestant organizations of Catholic States, there are the State establishments of Protestant Europe, there are the various forms of Nonconformity in Protestant countries ; there are, finally, the numerous forms of Christianity in the United States, where every sort of religion receives the shelter and kindly tolerance of the Government. The various forms of dissent in Russia, however interesting, cannot be studied to any satisfaction. Those in Catholic countries are now confronting changed political conditions ; especially in Spain, France, and Italy ; and it is too early to determine their effect upon the Latin races. Not so, however, with the Christianity of the people in North-western Europe and America. I call it the Christianity of the people and not of the princes, partly because the separation from Rome was in the last analysis the act of the people, and partly because all these forms of Christianity exist by the consent or by the effort of the people. An American must, of course, treat the national Churches of Europe with great reserve. They are, apparently, so interwoven with dynastic and partisan interests that he can never be sure what phases of them he may attribute to the development of Christian experience. "The nation," wrote Newman, "drags down the Church to its own level." Surely, though, it may also drag it up. The appeal to the people has not always, but it has sometimes, saved Christianity, and has saved more than one establishment. Wesley, for instance, did more to rescue the Church of England than all the Archbishops of Canterbury, from Tenison to Sutton. We ourselves are beholders of the splendid sepul-

chres that recent historians have builded to the preacher that their fathers stoned. And the more the influence of the great revival is studied in detail, the greater will appear the debt, not of the English nation only, but of the English Church, to this holy fire that she flung from her altars in anger. The nation drags the Church to its own level, and they that raise the nation above the level of the Church drag it nearer to the throne of God. Thus expanded, Newman's deliverance is true enough. It holds also in America, where the Churches are surrounded by a social medium, pressing upon them all equally and modifying their structure, their spirit, their speech, their discipline. In Protestant Europe, however, the influence of the people upon the establishment differs, as their governments and their traditions. No English monarch could affect the development of the Church as Frederic II., and afterwards Frederic William IV., affected that of Prussia. Yet no Prussian king, not even another Frederic, could greatly abridge the freedom of theological teaching in his realm; and a tragic career like that of Hans Nielson Hauge would be impossible under the political conditions of modern Norway. It is this intricate entanglement of tradition and political vicissitude which bewilders both the native and the alien student,—the native, because he shares in every agitation; the alien, because he lacks sympathy and local knowledge.

Four tendencies, however, can be plainly traced in the national Churches of the nineteenth century:

1. A spiritual tendency—the revival of vital piety fraught with noble ethical feeling and purpose.

2. A priestly tendency—the revival of pre-Reformation

dogma. This has been connected frequently with the great apostasy, as Coleridge termed it, "to speak of the Church, meaning only the clergy." It has been avowedly an effort to lift dogma and priesthood beyond the influence of the people. So long as the Church is connected with the State, this element seeks to control its action; if separated from the State, it would assert its independence of the people.

3. An academic tendency—the daily weaving and unweaving of the fabric of traditional doctrine. This element is the ruler of modern biblical science and of modern theology in Germany, whence its influence has gone out to all the world; but the toleration of it beyond certain limits in a National Church destroys the purpose of its creation. Even accepting Matthew Arnold's view that the Church "is a great society for the promotion of goodness," the Church must give a definite content to the term "goodness," and must have a definite teaching in order to further "the righteousness and the kingdom" which it exists to promote.

4. A secular tendency—the shaping of the Church into an organ of prevailing opinion, an instrument for realizing dominant social ideals. The national Churches of Protestant Europe are told that they must have a positive sympathy with popular ideals; otherwise they must betake themselves to the wilderness.

These four tendencies vary with their environment, but they are everywhere manifest, and upon their reconciliation depends the future of the national Churches. There must be holiness. There must be dogma. Dogma must be reverently perfected by a conscientious science. The

ideals of a people must be ennobled and then shared by the teachers of religion. De Maistre was, doubtless, correct in his assertion that absolutism and Protestantism are incompatible, only the true reason of it escaped him: absolutism and Christianity are incompatible. Hence we may not look for the reconciliation of experience, dogma, science, and popular ideals in an absolute Church, or in the Church of an absolute State. But can they be reconciled in a National Church? The question is becoming urgent, and admits of two answers. Where Christians are in control, yes; elsewhere, no. For the religious element of a great people will never accept the Christianity of the irreligious.

If the founding of the Free Church of Scotland proved nothing else, it proved this surely. And the stronger the spiritual element becomes, the less submissive is it to either the priestly or the secular tendency. By making the nations really Christian the State Churches of Protestant Europe can vindicate and preserve their existence; in no other way. The process of their disintegration in Germany and Scandinavia would, of course, be slow and complicated and perilous. In England it would be more rapid and less disastrous; for Great Britain, thanks "to the ancient and inbred integrity and piety of her children," has a sturdy Nonconformity, the value and virtue of which will be revealed in that trying hour. Disestablishment has been contemplated alternately with dread and with desire even by earnest churchmen like the late Dean Church. "It would be a going into the wilderness," he thought, "but it might be an escape from irreligious domination." He had welcomed it for Ireland; but if it came in England, how could parties hold together in such a revolution?

Parties would not hold together. They are united now mechanically, and not chemically. In the moment of disestablishment elective affinities would assert themselves in England as they do in America, and the Nonconformist conscience would prevent that exodus to Rome which has been so frequently predicted. An heroic story and an heroic spectacle, this Nonconformist conscience ! The genesis of it can hardly be so simple as sweet lucidity depicted. Even in America, the paradise of sects, as Matthew Arnold called it, institutions rooted in antiquity are coveted. Americans are, therefore, slow to believe that their ancestors found it so easy to abandon the ancient temples. But their forebears seem to have been encumbered with a conscience. They seem to have found a difficulty in obeying man rather than God. Doubtless they included among the divine mandates many spurious edicts, yet the main point after all was to do the will of God as they conceived it. They had not discovered that He was only "a stream of tendency." To them He was a real Person who had deposited His will in Holy Writ. And to obey it as they understood it they went into the wilderness ; they have made it habitable ; it is no longer the abode of wild beasts and of cruel men, and if all good men should be compelled to enter it they might make it blossom as the rose.

British Nonconformity is more than an heroic spectacle ; it is more than the remnant of the Puritan conscience : it is the silver streak that separates English Christianity from papal domination. Nay, it is more than this. Its conflicting currents have tempered, in spite of all their tumult, the social atmosphere of Great Britain, and they have developed that aggressive moral earnestness which

has done so much to shape the public opinion and the legislation of the United Kingdom. Mr. Gladstone, in 1894, wrote this noteworthy paragraph: "I must admit that at periods not wholly beyond my memory, and in appreciably large portions of the country, it has appeared as if the hands principally charged with the training of souls for God were the hands mainly, or only, of Nonconformists. God has blessed them in electing them to perform duties neglected by others, and in emboldening them to take a forward part, not limited to our narrow shores, on behalf of the broadest interests of Christianity."

To Nonconformity, therefore, rather than to the National Church, we must look for the reconciliation of dogma, and experience and science and popular ideas. And there are indications already of its coming. The century has united serious believers of every name in enterprises of justice and philanthropy. Bigotry has dwindled; enthusiasm for essential Christianity has swallowed up the minor differences; tradition, knowledge, holiness are uniting to form a creed simple, definite, and fruitful, and a conduct heroic, humble, fraternal, Christlike. Voluntary Churches are, of necessity, held together by definite belief and definite purpose. Disclaiming infallibility, they can respect each other and perfect themselves. They can combine under common principles for divine achievements. They can urge each other forward to nobler conceptions and wiser methods. The tenacity of one for tradition corrects the eagerness of the other for innovation. Improvements here provoke inventions everywhere. Instability means ruin; hence they are bravely conservative. Immobility means disaster; hence they are prudently progressive.

The value of these voluntary congregations becomes most apparent when we compare the Christianity of Great Britain with the Christianity of Germany, where the absence of an heroic and a powerful corrective to the State Churches is almost a calamity. Political conditions, unfortunately, prevented its development; princes were numerous, and within their narrow limits absolute. Teachers might be expelled from universities and preachers from parishes, yet they found refuge quite frequently at other courts, so that particularism in the State furthered particularism in theology. Independence was often crushed, but often fostered. When, therefore, the tendencies to union asserted themselves in the nineteenth century, comprehension produced confusion, and this was only increased by enlarging the power of an irreligious laity. Instead of living doctrine one hears a tumult of theological discussion and the perpetual discord of parties. The State Churches are not tempered, restrained, stimulated, by contact with an aggressive and conscientious Nonconformity. The spiritual element lives in a choking atmosphere of controversy and unbelief. It has no support in the nation such as the spiritual element in the Church of England or the Church of Scotland may always expect. It has had saintly thinkers like Richard Rothe, and inspired philanthropists like Gustav Fliedner; there are signs in many places of the persistence of vital piety amid all these confusions; indications also of a spiritual and ethical revival in which the living Christ shall reassert His power: but the separation of some genuine Christian elements from the State Churches of Germany would be the salvation of Protestant Christianity and its permanent enthronement in the newly founded empire.

Considerations like these make the experiment in America so important. In the United States ecclesiastical conditions have been wholly unprecedented. The few establishments that existed when the Federal Union was framed have disappeared. And a system that had many hazards, even in a homogeneous population of three millions, must now be continued amid a heterogeneous multitude of seventy-five millions; continued, too, in the presence of social conditions where bankers and merchants wield powers that kings and princes never knew, although hampered by oppositions that may, if exasperated, wreck every institution upon which these powers and the general welfare depend. It was prophesied, of course, when the establishments were abolished (the last in 1818) that religious teaching would disappear, or at least deteriorate to an impotent echo of local thought and prejudice. It has certainly not disappeared. The magnificent development of religious life in America under the voluntary system is a wonder of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the American system has fostered an ugly offspring of ignorance and the carnal mind,—demagogues, parasites, pulpit-comedians, blasphemous charlatans, preaching exploiters of folly and superstition, feverish agitators, and unscrupulous fanatics. Yet these are, after all, the small dust of the balance; they inflame and irritate the eyes, but they have neither weight nor mass. Arnold of Rugby declared that the natural consequence of having no establishment is the increasing separation of the sects from each other. Matthew Arnold rejoiced to learn on “good authority that in America, the paradise of sects, there is a tendency to agglomerate in two or three great

bodies." Both were wrong. There is no longer in the American sects a tendency to subdivision ; this disappeared with slavery. There is only the tendency of every organization to shed its looser and its alien particles. And there is no tendency of the larger bodies to agglomerate. These all maintain their integrity with quiet perseverance. What they tend toward is similarity of belief and co-operation in action, except in those bodies where "they speak of the Church, meaning only the clergy."

The present divisions of the American Churches are sectional, ethical, personal, social, traditional. Thus the breaches caused by slavery and the war have not been closed. Foreigners and their children, Scandinavians and Germans especially, when they establish Churches, prefer their mother tongue. A great personality in any pulpit creates for himself a following, drawn from many sources. The friendships of the young draw them frequently into new church relations. But the traditional influence is the strongest ; is powerful in all the larger organizations, and gives them stability.

The indications are that Christianity in America will round out into three great systems,—a dogmatic, hierarchical Christianity predominantly Roman, a Christianity of experience of which Christ will be the living fountain, and a Christianity of ethical activity in which Jesus will be revered as the dead founder. Between these, of course, there will be scattered fragments of an earlier splendour, or new results of centrifugal tendencies ; and, around them all, a tumbling, unorganized chaos of agnosticism and irreligion. The Christianity of experience is revealing already the rudiments of federative organization. It may develop

some day into a federative Protestantism, instinct with spiritual power and glorious in ethical achievement; a co-operative union held together by a simple creed and a fraternal code, planning and working for the salvation of the world and the betterment of man's estate. Slavery and the Civil War have hindered such a development hitherto; agnosticism and Romanism now further, and may ultimately compel, it. Rome, though losing heavily from many causes, confronts this Christianity of experience with a superb strategy and the *momentum* of a mighty organization. Agnosticism—arrogant, defiant, now cultured, now vulgar—scoffs superciliously or attacks brutally, and forces the earnest Christian to abandon his *impedimenta*. And thus the catechisms that separated our fathers, once so familiar to the children of New England, are now regarded as remnants of the Glacial Age, and turned over to the geological section of historical theology. There is, moreover, in each of the great denominations a progressive element which gradually expands the ancient boundaries, while the mordant atmosphere that surrounds all the Churches tends to disintegrate creeds and to modify belief and practice. The people generally have no coherent system of doctrine. A passionate love for Jesus, an heroic readiness to serve Him, is manifest in many places; but there is also a feverish impatience to submerge all serious thinking beneath a clamour of phrases, the rallying cries of an unintelligent enthusiasm. "What would Jesus do?" is offered as the solution of all moral problems; "Christ is Christianity" as the sum of all revelation. Beneath the surface, though, the careful observer detects two movements of signal import. They flow in opposite directions:

one towards agnosticism, the other towards antiquity. Both are noiseless, both are continuous. Both have their sources in the same region—the intellectual difficulties of Christianity. Many that encounter these difficulties forsake the Churches quietly; others seek the consoling bosom of ancient and venerable authority. Wherever these difficulties are maximized, there the outward flow is strongest and most rapid; but it is strong also wherever faith is feeble, doctrine vague, or conduct doubtful. The Protestantism of America founded schools and planted colleges; it diffused science boldly and unsparingly. Now it must conquer the intelligence that it has trained. This intelligence will endure no unnecessary fetters and bear no useless burdens. It is, however, too penetrating, too candid, and too serious to accept a nebulous radiance for the ancient heaven and its well marked constellations. It requires clear statement, lucid reasoning, a belief not only audible but visible, and the thrill of real experience. Those that demand too much and those that demand too little of the American mind and conscience will forfeit the future for their folly.

The American pulpit reflects the thought and feeling of the American people; reflects them in all their many varieties. The tribe of Balaam survives, of course,—men who prophesy and curse for pay or popularity, and who mingle sometimes the noblest truth with error and misconduct. But there are other prophets also,—men rich in courage, piety, personal charm, and mental power, who preserve, enlarge, and transfigure the doctrines of their communities and even of their denominations. Christianity in America owes its stability and commanding power to this goodly company, which has been large and noble and compre-

hensive. Although often misunderstood and sometimes maligned, these saintly leaders have not feared the face of man, and have wrought that others might be perfect. Not the least powerful of them were the pioneer Methodist preachers. If these did not extinguish, they silenced or transformed the repugnant Calvinism which they attacked so boldly. They did more than lay the foundations of the mighty Methodism whose development is an irrefutable proof of the divinity of Christianity; they made the Wesleyan conception of the New Life the prevailing type of American piety. This is manifest in all the Churches; in theologians like Bushnell and Phelps, in a great revivalist like Moody, in preachers like Phillips Brooks, and in the language of the common people. These pioneer preachers were a stalwart company. They had keen intelligence, though without erudition; they wore and talked homespun; they lived Christ, and were ready to die with Him. "God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in His Son." Thus they startled, provoked, and conquered the settlers of the New World. Nor were they less effective as teachers of morality. Their standards were rigid, their speech plain and persuasive, their example blameless, their insistence upon individual accountability urgent and emphatic. They saved the frontier and thereby saved the nation. To be sure, priest and preacher in America, as elsewhere, tend to conform to the ideals of their rulers; and, as in America the people rule, conformity to popular ideals is natural and easy. Hitherto these have been purified and ennobled by the intrepid and devoted men of every name, —saints, heroes, martyrs, of all the Churches, who counted

nothing so dear to them as Christ, and who held up the truth in righteousness. And there is no reason to think the seed exhausted. Conditions, indeed, have changed. To preach the severity and mercy of God simply and bravely, alike to the millionaire and the multitude, demands the perfect love that casts out fear. To discover and apply the needed truth for the emergencies of a civilization without parallel in human history requires the wisdom that cometh from above. Love and wisdom, however, are continually increasing. Witness the concord of the Churches and their co-operation in philanthropic enterprise. Witness, too, the seriousness with which the relations of the Church to society and to science are discussed by the ablest minds of America. The impending battle there, as in the rest of Christendom, will be a battle for New Testament ideals of thought and life; not so much a battle of organized Churches against the world, as a battle of Christ and His disciples against the carnal mind.

This, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter. The Christianity of the nineteenth century is found in many organizations and limited to none. Whatever may be human predilections, it seems to be no part of the divine plan to compel external unity. The value of the latter is easily exaggerated. Surely the internal dissensions of the German and the English Churches are not made diviner by covering them with the same roof. And obedience to human authority, however sublime its pretensions, abject obedience to Czar or to Pope, is a poisonous substitute for a living faith. As dialects disappear before languages, as the mysterious affinities that determine national character prevail gradually over all hindrance, thus only may we

expect the spiritual energies of the communion of saints to work out slowly, and possibly not until the lapse of centuries, that outer temple which shall at once include and symbolize the concord of perfected Christian thought and the sublimity of perfected Christian morality.

II

THE CHRISTIANITY OF EXPERIENCE

“ It is generally supposed, that traditional evidence is weakened by length of time ; as it must necessarily pass through so many hands, in a continued succession of ages. But no length of time can possibly affect the strength of this internal evidence. It is equally strong, equally new, through the course of seventeen hundred years. It passes now, even as it has done from the beginning, directly from God into the believing soul. Do you suppose time will ever dry up this stream ? Oh no ! It shall never be cut off :

Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

“ 2. Traditional evidence is of an extremely complicated nature, necessarily including so many and so various considerations, that only men of a strong and clear understanding can be sensible of its full force. On the contrary, how plain and simple is this ; and how level to the lowest capacity ! Is not this the sum : ‘ One thing I know ; I was blind, but now I see ’ ? An argument so plain, that a peasant, a woman, a child, may feel all its force.

“ 3. The traditional evidence of Christianity stands, as it were, a great way off ; and therefore, although it speaks loud and clear, yet makes a less lively impression. It gives

us an account of what was transacted long ago, in far distant times as well as places; whereas the inward evidence is intimately present to all persons, at all times, and in all places. It is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, if thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ. ‘This,’ then, ‘is the record,’ this is the evidence, emphatically so called, ‘that God hath given unto us eternal life; and this life is in His Son.’

“4. If, then, it were possible (which I conceive it is not) to shake the traditional evidence of Christianity, still he that has the internal evidence (and every true believer hath the witness or evidence in himself) would stand firm and unshaken. Still he could say to those who were striking at the external evidence, ‘Beat on the sack of Anaxagoras.’ But you can no more hurt my evidence of Christianity, than the tyrant could hurt the spirit of that wise man.

“5. I have sometimes been almost inclined to believe that the wisdom of God has, in most later ages, permitted the external evidence of Christianity to be more or less clogged and incumbered for this very end, that men (of reflection especially) might not altogether rest there, but be constrained to look into themselves also, and attend to the light shining in their hearts.

“Nay, it seems (if it may be allowed for us to pry so far into the reasons of the divine dispensations) that, particularly in this age, God suffers all kinds of objections to be raised against the traditional evidence of Christianity, that men of understanding, though unwilling to give it up, yet, at the same time they defend this evidence, may not rest the whole strength of their cause thereon, but seek a deeper and firmer support for it.

“6. Without this I cannot but doubt, whether they can long maintain their cause; whether, if they do not obey the loud call of God, and lay far more stress than they have hitherto done on this internal evidence of Christianity, they will not, one after another, give up the external, and (in heart at least) go over to those whom they are now contending with; so that in a century or two the people of England will be fairly divided between real Deists and real Christians.

“And I apprehend this would be no loss at all, but rather an advantage to the Christian cause; nay, perhaps it would be the speediest, yea the only effectual, way of bringing all reasonable Deists to be Christians.”

—JOHN WESLEY TO THE REV. DR. MIDDLETON.

These are the words of John Wesley in a letter to Dr. Conyers Middleton. They have an almost supernatural ring, so remarkable is their adaptation to the century now closing and to the Christianity of experience which has been the most notable development of modern Christendom. The external aspects of this Christendom I have sketched imperfectly, and indicated already how little inclined I am to identify the substance of Christianity with its form, or to look for the substance only within some visible and commanding ecclesiastical establishment. The task I now attempt is far more difficult: it is to depict the struggle of living Christianity, the Christianity of experience, with the strange and in many respects hostile intellectual environment of the nineteenth century. And I choose the words of Wesley to guide me to my goal.

The eighteenth century ended with a great conflagration,

the French Revolution. This was greeted when it first flushed the horizon as the dawn of a new morning ; in France, in Italy, in Germany, in England, in America, it seemed to many (and they were of the noblest) the fulfilment of sublime expectations, the confirmation of their faith in the divinity of man. It appalled, to be sure, a mind like that of Edmund Burke, exciting it almost to madness. But Burke stood, at first, quite alone in his forecasts of ruin. And there were moments in which even he bowed to the majesty of a Providence wiser than his own, and admitted that "if a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it ; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it ; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself than the mere designs of men."

The great thinker was right both in his forebodings of calamity and in his foregleams of "a great change to be made in human affairs." Now that the catastrophe has receded, now that the better and permanent consequences have prevailed over its immediate and dire calamities, it is not impossible to read some decrees of Providence written quite legibly in blood and fire.

The French Revolution resulted from the conflict of Rationalism and Rousseauism with a moribund absolutism in Church and State. The rationalists intended only progress and reform. By applying reason to social conditions and institutions, they expected to purify and to perfect them, and to enrich with clear ideas every form of human existence. Rousseau, however, drew upon reason for his mode

of exposition only ; for his principles he drew upon his feelings and his imagination. He attacked, not ignorance, but the school ; he demanded, not progress, but a return to nature. A new species of man he thought by no means necessary ; only the right method of training him is wanted ; let him be reared as nature intended him, for freedom and for happiness. Without the cheerful optimism of Rationalism, and its idolatry of clear ideas, the work of renovation in France would have started and proceeded less confidently. But the contagion of hate propagated from Rousseau's pages found at hand conditions that made it virulent. And his worship of the natural man gave to this hatred the colour of virtue. And, consequently, to the amazement of rationalists everywhere, the work of renovation ended in disintegration and overthrow, in the tyranny of the mob and the mob's master.

Absolutists like Joseph de Maistre hastened to ascribe the Revolution to the Reformation. Rationalism and Rousseauism, they maintained, are the offspring of Protestantism, the name of which condemns it to denial and destruction. It must eternally protest. Liberalism, insisted John Henry Newman, is the anti-dogmatic principle. It is the eternal enemy of established verities. Such misreading of the French Revolution was both common and popular until Carlyle appeared, and he was for a long time a voice crying in the wilderness. For the first phase of the reaction was that of fear ; and while this lasted, the reason was abjured, with all her dreadful progeny. The second phase of it was a return to sanity, in which Carlyle and other defenders of the Revolution could obtain a hearing. The relations of the great uprising in France to the Reformation of the

sixteenth century gradually disclosed themselves ; and it began to appear in what respects both movements were, to use Burke's words, " decrees of Providence rather than designs of men." Three things are now quite evident concerning the Reformation of the sixteenth century :

1. Rationalism was not its predominant principle. The reason, released from all authority and divinely empowered to reshape the world in conformity to clear ideas, is the reason of Descartes and not of the Reformers. Whether the principle of the latter is tenable or not need not concern us now. But the only reason that the Reformers encouraged was a reason submissive to the obvious meaning of the Scriptures, subject to the revelation and the guidance of the Holy Spirit ; in a word, the reason of regenerated man.

2. Nevertheless, the hidden root of the Reformation was and is the attainment and paramount authority of a living experience of Christ in the soul of the believer. And the most remarkable product of it was the formation of groups of believers in Jesus Christ, who found God not in the ceremonies or through the mandates of a visible organization, but in the power of an endless life, of which faith and hope and love are the inward, and righteousness is the outward, witness. *Credo, ergo sum*, not *Cogito ergo sum*, is the watchword of the Reformation. It resembled Rationalism, it is true, in opposing an inner consciousness to traditional dogma ; it resembled Rousseauism in protesting against the tyranny of a ceremonial and conventional world that mutilated humanity in order to control it ; but it recognized, and drew its strength from the recognition of, divine restraints and divine influences within the soul.

3. Individual Rationalism is not the principle of the Modern Science, that is concomitant with the Reformation. Individual Rationalism is the anarchy of dogmatism ; whereas our Modern Science is the concord of co-operative intelligence directed by experience. Rationalism, like scholasticism, imposes dogma upon experience. We are, of course, born into a world of ideas ; dogmas arrived before us. But the creators of science correct and perfect their dogmas by the patient comparison and industrious production of experience. The issue is not, as de Maistre and Newman present it, between dogma and anti-dogma, but between dogma purified, enlarged, perfected by experience, and dogma reiterated by tyrannical authority.

The theology of the Reformation, like the mechanics of Galileo, started from experience ; and if it had been allowed to develop peacefully, the Christ within, the hope of glory, would have brought men gradually but certainly to a perfect understanding of the Christ of the New Testament. Past records and present perceptions would have here, as in the other sciences, explained and determined each other. But, unfortunately, the Reformers were compelled to fight for their lives. Hence the appeal to the Scriptures was to an armoury for weapons rather than to a depository of recorded experiences. The modern thinker, solving problems in that tranquillity which steadies and facilitates the operations of the mind, should deal gently with the men who endured the hostilities of the sixteenth and suffered from the turbulence of the seventeenth century. The wonder is that, through all these confusions and contro-versies, God preserved to Himself so large a remnant. Such

a remnant, though, can be traced through every century, and is to be found alike among Protestants and Catholics. To it belong Tyndale and Latimer, Bunyan and Baxter, Fletcher and Wesley. To it belong Luther and Gerhardt and Zinzendorf; to it belong also Pascal and Fénelon and Silvio Pellico. But why attempt to name them? For the real power lay rather in the inhabitants of God's hiding-places than in His conspicuous representatives. Pathetic and sublime is the persistence of this Christianity of experience in the midst of persecution and ridicule, of controversy and mental confusion, and in spite of obloquy, hatred, and tyranny. Its persistence in Protestant countries explains the religious character of Protestantism in the nineteenth century, especially in England and Germany. John and Charles Wesley were the heirs of Luther and debtors to the Moravians. Frederic Schleiermacher, the restorer of religion to the intellect of Germany, was influenced by this same communion of saints. Therefore the resemblance of the German teacher and preacher to the English evangelists; differences of nature and of nationality, of education and of circumstances, must explain the contrasts of doctrine and of career. Goethe recognized the influence of this piety in his *Confessions of a Beautiful Soul*; he saw that the power of an endless life flowing from believer to believer constituted the essence of Christianity; not propositions to be learned and recited, but a divine energy to be acquired and revealed, a living well of thought and volition from which flows continuously a beneficent activity. This Christianity of experience persisted, too, in spite of Rationalism. It encountered and defied ridicule just as it had suffered and smiled under hatred and hostility.

It would be hard to find a nobler expression of this defiance than the letters of the German Claudius to his *alter ego*, Andres : " Whosoever refuses to believe in Christ must see to it how to get along without Him. You and I cannot. We need someone to raise and support us while we live, and to put His hand under our heads when we die ; and this He can do abundantly, according to what is written of Him ; and we know of none that we would rather have. He is a blessed Form who rises before the poor pilgrim like a star in the night, and satisfies his innermost need, his most secret longing and expectation. We will believe on Him, Andres, even though none else believes in Him. We have not believed in Him because of others. Why should we cease to believe on Him when others abandon Him ? So divine a form is easily altered by the human imagination ; it cannot be touched by human hands without loss ; on this account there has been and there will be no end to the disputes and quarrels about Him."

This was, of course, enthusiasm and fanaticism to the rationalistic clergy and to the enlightened philosophers of the eighteenth century ; but it is a religious commonplace of the nineteenth. The growing reverence for Wesley, so marked in recent literature, is due to the perception that he anticipated the enthronement of experience, and that he applied the principles involved in it with candour and courage to the salvation of the English people. Mill and Morley overrate the influence of Coleridge when they ascribe to him the reaction against individual Rationalism. Coleridge influenced literature rather than life. The Hegelian philosophy of history and of religion which he diluted would have been feeble indeed but for the insistence

of Wesley and his friends upon an indwelling Christ. Coleridge's declaration that the Bible "found him" was nothing new to Methodist women, of whom Dinah Morris is the literary reflection; and when Alfred Tennyson listened in his own soul for the whispers of Jesus Christ and the assurance of eternal life, he caught for his harp of divers tones the music of the still small voice that had brought peace to the Kingswood collier and started anew the transformation of the Anglo-Saxon race. It was a bold word; the divine audacity of John Wesley has hardly yet been realized. "I want life; I am tired of opinions." It was the keynote of the Christianity of the nineteenth century, the Christianity of experience.

Meanwhile, however, the individual rationalism of Descartes, scholasticism minus theology, had taken possession of the European world. There is, verily, something majestic in the assertion of the human "I Am," in the presence of the universe with its portents and its powers, its riddles, its menace, and its mystery. Luther's "*Gott helfe mir, ich kann nicht anders*," is a cry of anguish compared with this proclamation of the sovereignty of the individual mind. Reason is life. This became the watchword of a new humanity, the promise of a new heaven and a new earth. A rational Church in a rational State, this was to be the glory of the future.

Rationalism, it is true, was exiled from France; but it found a hearty welcome in England and in Germany, producing in these countries the Deism of the eighteenth century. Thence it returned to France. Hidden disciples sallied forth to greet it; and there soon appeared that group of thinking flames, Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau,

who mistook the conflagration that they started for the rising of a new sun.

When the horror that followed died down to smoke and ruin, when the terrified and wearied nations came to themselves after the struggle and the havoc, three lessons were distinct and clear—(1) The natural man cannot save society ; (2) Man cannot live by ideas alone ; (3) History, or rather the great historical processes by which the present has been produced, must be revered and understood.

Rousseau, in the name of reason and the natural man, had attacked society as the source of misery and mischief, and he had exalted the natural man as the saviour of the future. There was, of course, much truth in his contention. We children of a later age know, as the world has not known hitherto, how misshaping and destructive may be the effect of a corrupt environment. But we know also that Rousseau's natural man has only mythical existence, and that the effects of man's social are as enduring as those of his physical surroundings. Authority can be defied ; the established routine of government and of morality can be interrupted. Men and women will remain, nevertheless, what nature and society have made them, only freed temporarily from irksome restraints and tending backwards to primitive brutality. The radical evil in human nature that Hume perceived, *das radicale Böse* that Kant expounded, revealed itself gloomily and terribly enough in the Revolution and the wretched decades that followed it ; so, too, did the accumulated mischief of defective and corrupt institutions. And yet plain as the lesson was written, terrible as were the characters employed in the awful script, the impulse of the people to assert and save

themselves proved indestructible. And it has dominated the century now closing. It has conquered the forces of political reaction and reconstituted every Government of Western Europe. It has shaped and reshaped the Republics of America. It has made of science and of literature a treasure for the common people; it has established the school and the lyceum and the library for the masses, and given them the newspaper and the magazine; it speaks in the still small voice of the ballot and in the mighty rushing wind of popular feeling. It trembles, and causes the world to tremble, with the projects that it frames. It is always in motion; now tranquilly, now boisterously. Is it moving towards defeat or triumph, towards calamity and the wreck of institutions, or to meet a New Jerusalem descending from above? Well, in spite of all cynical and timorous prophecy, the signs of a great hope are present in the Occidental world. And surely much of this confidence in the people is due to the communion of saints that persisted through the eighteenth century, and began to manifest unusual power at the beginning of the nineteenth. "In England, after the Revolution," writes Mr. Abbey, "the great majority, startled and terrified with what they saw, became fixed in a resolute determination that they would endure no sort of tampering in Church or State. Conservatism became in their eyes a sort of religious principle, from which they could not deviate without peril or treason to their faith." But did not Wesley and Zinzendorf and Oberlin and Claudius and Butler and Fletcher, and the goodly company that acted with them, by keeping alive the gospel in its purity preserve the belief in liberty, equality, and fraternity which the Revolution had proclaimed and

polluted? Christianity works for equality in two ways: it reduces all to the same level before God; it exalts all to the same privileges of power in Jesus Christ. One can estimate its humbling effect upon the proud by the notable letter of the Duchess of Buckingham to the Countess of Huntingdon. This arrogant but really sagacious epistle betrays more than the haughtiness of the great dame; it reveals the keen-eyed instinct of the children of privilege. The doctrines which, as she thought, levelled all ranks and effaced all distinctions before God, were of course repugnant to her grace. To be told that her own heart was just as sinful as that of any wretch that walked the earth offended her sense of propriety, and shattered her respect for a deity who exhibited such questionable taste. And, then, the real saints of the eighteenth century practised these doctrines; they gathered about them genuine brotherhoods in Jesus Christ, brotherhoods that derived both dignity and power from this divine relationship. And the people of England and America could neither have won nor endured their triumphs in the nineteenth century but for this transforming power of the gospel. It saved a glorious remnant in the older and the younger commonwealth; and this remnant, if it did not sanctify, has yet preserved the whole. In Jesus Christ the contradictions might be reconciled. The divinest might humble himself and lose no dignity; the people themselves are helpless, yet the people can do all things through Christ that strengthens them. Notables, and National Assemblies and Napoleons afterwards; Frederics and Catherines, with their imported philosophies and all the ingenuities of threatened thrones and altars, are impotent to save endangered institutions.

Just as impotent is an irreligious multitude eager to satiate the hungry senses and to tread the floors of hell. Carlyle could see this, at least, and screamed for Cromwell to rise from the dead. But he had little faith in the power of his shriek, and railed at the generation that worshipped stump orators and Morrison's pills. Mazzini saw the other side: he saw that political salvation must come through a regenerated people, that without faith it is impossible to establish and maintain free institutions. The natural man, from whom Rousseau expected so much, had proved incapable of comprehending and incapable of wielding the ideas by which the world might be transformed. He could hate, he could destroy, he could tear down his old temples, and deny the God that he had never worshipped and the Christ that he had never followed, he could make to himself new idols and fill the sky with false gods; but he could save neither himself nor the State. The perception of this led thinkers like de Maistre, churchmen like Keble and Newman, statesmen like Metternich, and even philosophers like Hegel, to their worship of absolutism. The world, their world, must be saved by dogmas, accepted humbly by the multitudes from the sovereign State and the sovereign Church. Yet, looking backwards, it is plain enough that the absolutists have lost the century. The power of the people, within their institutions, is thoroughly established in England and America, and likely to triumph everywhere in Europe. In one case only may we expect its overthrow—if Christianity becomes effete. But, as Dean Stanley declared to Tennyson, "Christianity, far from being effete, is as yet undeveloped." It carries in its bosom the secrets of innumerable transformations.

Like the forces of nature, which our laggard, quarrelling race has conquered all too slowly, even so the latent energies of the religion of Jesus have been hidden to them that sought them not. They have quivered in the circumambient air ready to be wielded. And we, too busy with the smoke and stir of earth, have been insensible to the thrill of their presence. Few indeed have found the sources of divine power ; few indeed have measured their extent and energy. But they have been found, and displayed sufficiently to give us glimpses of the civilization that might be wrought for a really Christian people.

This, then, is my first conclusion : the reaction that threatened to carry down both Protestantism and democracy has ended in the firmer establishment of both, because the Christianity of experience, which persisted and increased so quietly in the eighteenth, has maintained throughout the nineteenth century not only the dignity and grandeur, but the possibility and the confident expectation of a regenerated humanity.

But the Revolution that discredited Rousseauism, and extinguished the natural man as a possible saviour of society, discredited individual rationalism also ; it shattered irreparably the doctrine of salvation by ideas alone. Nay, it confirmed with reverberate emphasis the criticism of Hume and Kant, and thus made way for the elaborate schemes of Comte and of Hegel, the reactionary philosophers of the nineteenth century. To understand the intellectual currents and counter-currents of the last three generations, it is necessary to glance at the great Scotch sceptic and the greater idealist of Germany. Logic, laughed Hume, is an instrument of desire, not a method of discovery :

reason, suggested Kant, has very limited powers ; it can creep, but it cannot fly ; inside of experience it may even walk erect, but never let it break over these boundaries. The wish, said Hume, is always father to the thought ; ideas originate in the senses and in the heart ; this mind of which you boast so much is only a kind of glue that holds your mental states together. The proud " I am because I think " of Descartes shrinks to a nonchalant " I am a bundle of various impressions," a current of feelings and of ideas, with no more real unity than the drops that form a river. " Not quite so bad," returned Kant, after long deliberation. " Man must not be flattered, least of all because of his mind. In discovery he must learn to deny himself continually, he must wage perpetual warfare with error, and he must resign himself to the attainments of truth by small and slowly conquered instalments. In action he must surrender his pretensions to happiness, he must conquer his natural inclinations, he must yield himself a willing instrument to the practical reason, to the categorical imperative. And then he shall have freedom in the inward parts ; he shall see the splendour of a new world of indestructible value ; he shall have confidence and peace."

Both these blows were deadly. But the shock and terror of the Revolution hastened their effect. The natural reason, the arrogant claims of which Hume had derided and Kant had diminished—this natural reason was put to shame by its disastrous attempts at liberty, fraternity, and equality. And philosophy pondered how to restore the self-respect of the dishonoured intellect. Rationalism had brought confusion ; it was necessary to return to the

road that leads to life. But the wisdom of this world yields reluctantly and slowly to the foolishness of God ; the humbler methods of induction were set aside for the vaster pretensions of philosophy. Comte, in his Positivism, elaborated the sceptical empiricism of Hume into a magnificent classification of things that are and events that happen : with these our ephemeral souls must be content. Abandon, he exhorted, all inquiries into the origin and purpose of nature and humanity and society. Content yourself with the present ; satisfy your senses and your social impulse. Theology and metaphysics are the realms of unreality ; God is only the empty space about the things that are ! On the other hand, Hegel broke boldly across the boundaries that Kant had established, refusing to surrender hope of the knowledge that Kant had renounced, and audaciously developing the universe, and even God Himself, from the thinking process. Nevertheless, the attitude of Comte and Hegel towards nature and society is no longer that of the triumphant individual thinker who rebuilds the world with clear ideas. On the contrary, both prostrate themselves to the things and thoughts that are. Comte, it is true, would expel from the phenomena illusion and delusion, and for him the chief delusions are theology and metaphysics. Hegel, on the other hand, finds no delusions in nature or in history. All that has happened and all that exists must be accepted as the will of the mind of the world. "The passions of men eliminate each other ; reason alone is awake, pursues her purpose, and brings it to pass." "Philosophy has not to teach the world what it ought to be, but to recognize the reasonable as actual and the actual as reasonable." Whosoever knows what his age wills and

demands, tells it and achieves it; he is the great man of his epoch." Hegel finds the glory of life in the realm of absolute reason, in the region of art, religion, and philosophy. What the positivist rejects is for the German evolutionist the crown of human existence.

The noteworthy fact, though, is that each taught submission—Comte to the universal frame without a mind; Hegel to the universal frame and its manifold contents as the outcome of an absolute intelligence that is for ever realizing itself through the might of assertion and denial, and their reconciliation. And not submission only; they taught self-abnegation also. Man cannot live from his ideas, said Comte; he lives from the phenomena. He must live from his ideas, said Hegel; but let him derive them from the supreme idea of the actual world, from the self-revealing intelligence that is for ever leading captivity captive.

A change of attitude, verily. Reason no longer stands erect, demanding of the universe submission; but upon his knees the individual thinker worships the actual, or gropes after a self-developing God, in the progress of the universe and in the perturbations and catastrophes of human society!

Hegel hoped, doubtless, to reconcile his generation to existing institutions. The absolute reason to which he pointed was an invisible sovereign commanding all men everywhere to content themselves with things as they are, and to discover in the logic of the world-process the motives for this reconciliation. He failed in his own country. First came the young Germans with their sensualism and their revolutionary atheism; then Marx,

Lasalle, and the socialists, with their proclamation of a new synthesis; and finally, emerging from the tumult, Schopenhauer with his arraignment of the Will that had blundered into creating such a wretched world and the Intelligence that struggles to mitigate its misery.

Hegel's nebulous disciple, Coleridge, failed in England and America. Individual rationalists could not be soothed so easily. Carlyle's famous criticism of the sage of Highgate goes to the quick. "Coleridge," he writes, "had a high endowment with an insufficient will. He preferred to create *fata morgana* for himself, and laboriously solace himself with these." Only an insufficient will leads a thinker to take refuge in dogma-repeating machinery or in the fog-born formulæ of dialectic ingenuity. But the more daring rationalist is not to be dissuaded from his undertaking. The primary law of his mind, "Explain the world to yourself," is too imperative. The primary mandate of his will, "Create a better world for yourself," is too absolute. He defies tradition; he will discover the actual world for himself; he will rebuild it after the pattern shown to him in the mount of speculation. Accordingly, when the institutions that Hegel tried to save and to sanctify refused to submit to criticism, and proclaimed themselves the expression of absolute intelligence, they provoked a fresh attack. A storm of Liberalism swept over Europe. It threatened the State and attacked the Church. It assaulted traditions in the name of science, and challenged institutions in the name of humanity. Idealism was repudiated with fiery energy. But the old rationalism did not return. Instead of it came agnosticism. It promised neither a vision of God nor a New Jerusalem. It brought the ruin of hope,

and for consolation contrasted our ignoble ancestry of pointed ears and arboreal habits with our present high estate. This agnosticism of the nineteenth century is the child of rationalism and scepticism, and the foster-child of positivism. It derives its dogmatism from Descartes, but its humbleness from Hume. It knows nothing of God, human freedom, or immortality. It is, however, sure of law, of its universality, and its inviolability. It knows all that can never happen, although it does not know who is! and expounds these certainties of the impossible, serenely unaware that they are incompatible with the *non credo* of its ignorance. For surely if there should happen to be an *Eternal I Am*, if there should be a supreme Will, then the procession, or interruption, of events would depend upon Him. But the incompatibilities that devour each other in agnosticism lie aside from my purpose, which is to point out the causes of the reaction that agnosticism is now about to enter. This reaction, I insist, is not due to Hegel. It is not inherently philosophic. It is the rebellion of experience; it is the protest of the human soul refusing to be mangled and exterminated; it is the instinctive effort of faith and hope and love to escape the clutch of the destroyer. Agnosticism is only a dogmatism after all, and, like every new dogmatism, as soon as it musters an army of recruits it wears upon its head the semblance of a crown and lords it over human thought. Science, as we have already noted, is the perfection of ideas by the production of experience. Its method is as old as learning to see and to hear. Possibly, in the course of ages, men may learn to think with as much rapidity and accuracy as they now perceive; for thinking, as the recent psychology

is teaching us, accompanies all our seeing, and whenever we see correctly it is because in that marvellous process we think correctly too.

George Eliot, in *Silas Marner*, paints a pretty picture of baby Effie playing with her little toes and discovering the body that surrounds her soul. And Tennyson's lines depict the same experience :

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I":

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I," and "me,"
And finds "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

Now, it remained for a patient, plodding psychology to show how very much the baby rounded to a separate mind ; to show us that the laws of thought as well as the organs of sense were active in the discovery, "I am not what I see." And when this was made plain it began to appear how the arrogant imagination darkens counsel with its multitude of fictions, and how tyrannical desire mutilates, distorts, and misinterprets an original experience ; how we frame for ourselves an unreal world around the real one, prostrating ourselves before our own conceits. The actual world, visible and invisible, is revealed to those who take off their shoes and stand on holy ground ; who turn aside from their occupations and yet reverence solemnly

the witness of their innermost being. This is something quite different from individual rationalism. This is the insurrection of perception against the usurpations of the will ; a rebellion of intuition against the tyranny of the imagination ; an uprising of now and here against the dogmatism of yesterday and yonder ; the symphonic protest of those who seek against the despotism of the few that assert. The fresco at Florence depicting Galileo with his inclined plane as he confronts the Paduan professor and his copy of Aristotle's *Physics* illustrates the conflict. Experience challenges authority. Luther had done the same thing. He had opposed his experience of inward righteousness to the sovereign organ of ecclesiastical dogma. His "*Gott helfe mir, ich kann nicht anders*," is the eternal cry of humanity, falling back, when assailed in its innermost being, upon the *dicta* and the *data* of the soul. In his distress Luther invoked authority against authority ; so too did Galileo, for the Tuscan artist found it no easy task to defend even the crescent-shaped Venus of his telescope against philosophy and the Pope. But both were defending the citadel of life, and the descendants of Luther and the disciples of Galileo find themselves perpetually in the same strait. Experience battles everywhere with authority, with the dogmas of infallibility and the dogmas of agnosticism, with the dogmas of arrogant assertion and the dogmas of confident denial. Slowly indeed humanity perfects the process of perception. Slowly indeed it has learned to see and to hear. It has been slower still in learning that no dogma is of value that cripples the soul and enfeebles the heart ; that no institution can vindicate its existence and no theory maintain its authority which

impairs and impoverishes the experience of humanity. Now if it be objected that, by this enthronement of experience, truth is given over to individual caprice, the answer is not difficult. No denial of experience avails against the man to whom it has been given ; but no experience of another is valid for me except so far as I may and do repeat it. Thus Helmholtz remarks on certain observations of Purkinje that he accepts them because he has been able to verify so many other observations of that famous Danish investigator. Someone, he hoped, might verify them all. Paul was confronted at Corinth with the same demand that would confront him now. "Let your Christ reveal Himself to us also." This is the demand that science makes. "Reproduce the experience." Nay, she makes a larger demand. "Derive from this experience a perfected conception of the reality, and with your perfected concept produce a richer and nobler one. Convert experience into thought and reconvert your thought into experience." This is the magic, nay rather this is the divine power of true knowledge. We pass from experience to principle and from principle to experience in a glorious progress. If we are thus led to incredible mysteries, we accept them humbly, whenever they are fountains of efficiency. Huxley's declaration, "that the mysteries of Christianity are pale and feeble compared with those of science" is deeply significant, seeing that the latter would dissolve into thin air if they were not upheld by the experience that produced and the experience that corroborates and illustrates them. It sounds like the cry of a lost child when Henry Sidgwick writes to Alfred Tennyson that certain things must be true because men cannot live without

them ; and yet, childish as it is, it finds an echo in the brain of modern science. The assumptions and the inferences must be true which harmonize our experience, which enrich our powers, which ennoble society, which deliver our souls. For precisely this is what we moderns mean by truth ; which will ultimately exclude from science all the ideas that a false philosophy has smuggled into it to serve as doorkeepers against reality. Scientists will learn to respect phenomena and intuitions that they have denied or despised upon metaphysical grounds ; especially those rejected because of the materialistic assumptions that are always lurking in human thought. Scientists will recognize also the deadening of the spiritual faculties that punishes an idolatrous devotion to the world of sense. Darwin's pathetic confessions will warn his followers not to value extravagantly the outer knowledge that destroys, or at least benumbs, the susceptibility to nobler forms of experience. The scientist of the future will be less confident of his negations because less neglectful of his soul. Hereafter all that the agnostic will permit himself to say about God or Christ is this, " I myself have no experience of Him," which, like Dalton's colour blindness, will be not a mark of superior, but of inferior, vision. Theologians, on the other hand, will learn the same lesson. Ideas that are not involved in experience, that cannot be verified by experience, that in nowise enrich experience, will be challenged continually. The boundaries of spiritual life will be extended by the application of our noblest conceptions, and the enlarging life will, in turn, purify and ennoble these ideas. God will be sought where He is easiest to be found ; not in the cosmic atoms of the primal universe,

but in the experience of prophets and of saints and in one's own soul. For the dilemma so clearly presented by Flint in his discussion of theism has been present more or less consciously in all the devout reasoning of our century: "If it is the necessary forms of our thinking that make experience possible, then experience cannot be limited to objects of sense; then it must include the realm of moral and religious life. If, on the other hand, the validity of these forms of thought is challenged, then all the sciences crumble together into vanity." And the language of James Martineau gives no more than philosophical expression to the faith of believers like John Wesley and David Livingstone. "God is not a First Cause prefixed to the scheme of things, but the Indwelling Cause pervading it; not excluded by second causes, coinciding with them while transcending them: the one existing objective agency, the modes of which must be classified and interpreted by science in the outer field and by conscience in the inner." Positivism, Idealism, Realism, may find agreement here. The first may teach the worship of the actual, the second may proclaim the majesty of the inner, and the third the supremacy of the outer world; God manifesting Himself in all three. But nothing is of private interpretation. Only the actual experience of all humanity can regulate our present knowledge; only the possible experience of all humanity can fix the boundaries of faith. Humbling ourselves, we shall be exalted. The lowliest soul and the lowliest flower may have revelations for us that outshine the stars. The mind of Newton, the genius of Faraday, see through a glass darkly, catching glimpses of fragments, gleams of reflected splendour beyond which roll the

immeasurable deeps. And what God has hidden from the prudent He may still reveal to babes.

Here, then, is my second conclusion: the reaction against individual rationalism, that threatened to deliver the human mind a helpless captive to either the dogmatism of assertion or the dogmatism of denial, has ended in a reverence for the concordant actual and possible experience of the human soul; and this is due to the saints who have defended their inner experience against the assaults of agnostic metaphysics, and to the genuine scientists who have cast out preconceptions and accepted humbly all the phenomena of life, with all the concepts, however astonishing, that lead to further discovery and power, to the preservation, the enlargement, the enrichment of the soul and of society.

It remains now to depict the struggle of experience to rescue the records of the past, to prevent their mutilation and their misinterpretation. To do this properly we must return once more to the point from which we started. Volcanoes remain without satisfactory explanation; so do revolutions. Yet the real wonder is perhaps the solid, quiet earth; a stable and harmonious society. Only a great disturbance of human institutions makes us aware of the perpetual conflict of the past with the present, of the *momentum* of yesterday with the opposing energy of to-day. Ordinarily this conflict is concealed; the equilibrium, though unstable, is for the most part preserved. But there are epochs of explosion and devastation in which the unceasing struggle is disclosed. Such instants in the history of humanity are preceded always with a contempt for antiquity, with a disbelief in the value of ancient ideas and earlier

achievements. The makers of the world are arraigned as bunglers; and with arrogant impetuosity the children of the hour set about to make all things new, according to their dreams. To say that the French Revolution was caused by this contempt for history would be to put, once more, the part for the whole. The past indeed is seldom despised until the present becomes painful. Then, when the defenders of existing evils invoke the authority of antiquity to their support, the unhappy victims of them attack and revile their ancestors. Now the makers of any great epoch, Jesus of Nazareth included, both accept and abolish the authority of the olden time; for they must abolish a past that never was present, a history that has been created to sanctify abuses, to establish and to enlarge the tyrannies of the chief priest and the rulers. This is the "fable convenue," the accepted fiction, that Napoleon derided. But the rationalists of the eighteenth century accepted nothing; they condemned antiquity in the lump; or, like Gibbon, they attributed the decline and fall of antiquity to the triumph of unreason. They arraigned in their court of clear ideas the Crown and the Church, civilization and Christianity, as the authors of misery, and prosecuted them with malignant ingenuity. They did not discriminate those prejudices in which Burke saw "the prevalence of a latent wisdom" from the falsehoods of iniquity and folly. And they produced, accordingly, that misconstruction of the archives of Christianity of which Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is the classical instance. For Gibbon wrote not a history, but an impeachment. He arraigned Christianity as the destroyer of civilization, and prosecuted the mighty culprit

with an erudition and a subtlety of suggestion unexampled in the history of literature. For a time, at least, friends feared and enemies clamoured for conviction and for condemnation. Slowly, however, Gibbon's purpose became clear. The story, as he told it, was a masterly illustration of rationalistic ideas ; it was the attack of a powerful genius upon every form of belief in the supernatural. Christianity, as he conceived it, was, to begin with, the chief of superstitions, and therefore a monster and a mischief. It sounds like a paradox, to be sure, to accuse so magnificent and erudite a narrator of a contempt for history. But the haughtiness of the *advocatus diaboli* is too manifest ; the pride of a superior intelligence glittering through antithesis and epigram, and the scorn of enlightenment flashing fire upon the heads of all the figures in his wonderful procession. St. Beuve in his *Port Royal* imagines a conversation between Pascal and Molière ; one wishes there had been an interview of Edward Gibbon and John Wesley. The man of living experience would have pointed out to the historian that the indestructible elements in Christianity, its chief elements, were not the archives of its origin, but the continued operations of the pentecostal Spirit, the ceaseless production of living experience in the souls of the believers. He would have told him that the Christianity of the present must be the clue to the Christianity of the past ; that with the experience of Christ in his own heart he might have traced the evidences of His power in the saints of every age ; that it is this experience, accessible to everyone that believes, whereby the archives of the Apostolic Church are perpetually vitalized, confirmed, and reinterpreted. And were Gibbon alive now he would

discover that this conception of present experience, as the explanation of all records and monuments, has become the substantial hope of scientific history. But, unfortunately, the reaction against the rationalistic contempt for the past soon escaped the control of experience. Romanticism and theories of evolution, German and English, dominated for decades the nineteenth century, and preconceived ideas have struggled with saner methods to control and reshape the records of the past.

The ideas of the past prevailing at the beginning of the century were, to be sure, erroneous enough. One reads with humiliation much of what excited the admiration of our immediate ancestors. And it is the shame of theologians that Gibbon's narrative was the first to recognize, in the tremendous vigour of its assault, the influence of Christianity in the shaping of the European world. The needful thing, of course, was to represent the reality by a scientific study of living Christianity, and the records of its origin and its progress. Unfortunately, the work was not attempted until the romanticists, on the one hand, and the evolutionists, on the other, gave to the world their glittering fables and their unstable reconstructions of the ancient archives. First of all came the romanticists, creating pictures of bewildering beauty. Truth and poetry were blended together in the delineation of heroic figures and of transcendent epochs. History became a fine art. Although the dead could not be raised, their shadows could be summoned from the vasty deep; the inner springs of great events could be explored and disclosed; the secrets of national character could be discovered in legend, in language, and in law, in polity and poetry. "The sons began to revere

deeply what the fathers had thrown away as superstition. Rousseau was followed by Chateaubriand and the Italian Manzoni ; by Schleiermacher and Neander, and the Catholic convert Schlegel in Germany ; and by Coleridge and John Henry Newman and Pusey in England." These were enamoured, like Pygmalion, of their own creations ; capricious representations of Anglicanism, of Catholicism, and of Christianity, that they had derived neither from experience nor from monuments. The institutions imperilled by the derision of the rationalists must be saved by glorification and deification. Christian experience, the living process of Christ in the soul, could not be trusted to the faith of the believer and the ever-present Holy Spirit ; it must be safeguarded by a Church and a priesthood, visibly and historically derived from the apostles. That such a Church existed was not a fact, but a postulate ; if it had been a fact, neither postulate nor argument would have been required to establish its authority. It would have demanded no more proof of its superhuman origin than the sun in its daily progress through the sky.

But the rewriting of the history of Christianity was not to be given over finally to the romanticists. It was to fall into the hands of German philosophy, and to be determined by a blending of rationalism with the Hegelian theory of evolution. Goethe, with his wonderful insight, had perceived that Jesus Christ was the central figure of human history ; only so could the past records and present society be explained. Schiller had seized the eternal significance of the mission of Moses, and Herder's soul had vibrated to the spirit of Hebrew poetry. Lessing saw that revelation meant education, the education of humanity ;

that the teachers of divine truths must rise always above the common level, and prepare, through their disciples, the future that they depicted. These were poets, all of them. If their experience of God and of Christ had been richer, they would have interpreted the records of the olden time even more correctly and more adequately. Each, however, carried in his life sufficient of the influence of Christianity to recognize the grandeur and, so to speak, the historic necessity of a divine manifestation for the progress and perfection of humanity. But German philosophy and German poetry were, at the beginning of the century, in close contact, and affected each other powerfully. And all these suggestions entered into Hegel's conception of history. He intended, as has been remarked already, to save, by sanctifying them, the State and the Church. And to sanctify them he must prove them to be rational. It was romanticism inverted. To the romanticist inherited institutions were reasonable because their origin was divine. To Hegel they were divine because they were reasonable; only, to the German philosopher Reason and God were names for the same inscrutable energy. How little did Hegel, the harmonizer, imagine the chaos of discords that his disciples would produce! Wolf and Niebuhr, in the spirit of Herder and of Schiller, had attempted to reconstruct the life of Greece and Rome. Classical antiquity still held sway through its indestructible literature; and to reconstruct for the imagination the whole experience of which this literature was but a fragment was an enterprise that fascinated these explorers and excited them to indefatigable research. But what was classical literature compared to

the Bible? What problem of history could be compared to Christianity and its Founder? Strauss and Baur were fascinated, as Niebuhr had been, with the olden time, and hastened to apply to its chief epoch and archives the Hegelian theory. Each dealt with the same problem, but in a different fashion. Strauss dealt with the centre of it, the person of Jesus; Baur, with its expanding circumference, the Christianity of St. Paul. Now the intellectual and spiritual life of a generation are related to its records, as the consciousness of a man is related to his memory. Destroy the former and you destroy the latter; change the latter and you change the former. You may impair or you may enrich it, either one. And the tragic struggle of our age, the struggle precipitated by Strauss and Baur, the struggle in which all serious thinkers of our century have been involved, has been due chiefly to the poverty of the Christian consciousness in the modern world. And the victory thus far achieved is to be attributed to the persistence of Christian experience and to the enlargement of it developed in the vicissitudes of the conflict. If the Christ within humanity, the Christ that makes for righteousness, the power of an endless life that expands and transforms society through the faith and energy of his disciples—if this Christ within humanity had corresponded more frequently and fully to the Christ of the Gospels, God would have found other teachers for the world than these heavy-handed Hegelian historians. Or, if the experience of the historians themselves had been larger and nobler, the immediate outcome would have been quite different. They, however, were like colour-blind lecturers expounding the wonders of the spectrum. The defects

of their experience impaired their explanations. This is particularly noteworthy in the case of Baur, inasmuch as he came so near the whole secret of Christian history. For the experience of Paul is the typical Christian experience; it is the kind of experience that is now discoverable, and producible in those that never knew Jesus in the flesh. And the first question of a truly scientific inquirer would have been, Are there any living instances of this same power, souls who can say, as Paul said, "The law of the spirit of life which was in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"? It was no mere idiosyncrasy of Michael Faraday, but the secret of all scientific discovery, that he disclosed in the statement, "I can do nothing with the record of any experiment until I myself have produced it in my laboratory." The epistles of Paul are personal experience; to match this experience is the beginning of an explanation. Instead of that, Baur selected an incident in Paul's career as an evangelist, and made of it the explanation of the faith that he established. If an experience like that of Paul is neither actual nor possible in modern life, then indeed the Christ of Paul and of the Fourth Gospel is only a shadow. But if the communion of saints is a perpetual reproduction of this experience; if the same apprehension of Jesus Christ as the power of an endless life is followed by the presence of the Spirit bearing witness to sonship and joint-heirship, and producing a strength by which all things are accomplished,—then the verification of the Pauline conception of Jesus, as Wesley saw so clearly, is always at hand. It must be conceded to Baur, then, that he rendered a great service by giving flesh and blood to the Apostle of the Gentiles, and by depicting him strug-

gling against a view of Christ that would have deprived his Redeemer alike of universal authority and of divine attributes. Paul, like his Master, appeared in the fulness of time ; a mighty nature was needed to exhibit to all the coming ages how Jesus Christ operates upon the souls of them that never touched His human hands, and such a nature was found in the former pupil of Gamaliel. If, therefore, the watchword, "Back to Jesus," means that the new conception of the Master is to be framed independently of the experience of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and of his successors in the company of those who have died unto sin and have risen with Christ, then indeed there is great danger that we shall exchange the real Christ for a diminished image of Him, an image powerless to continue Christianity because powerless to deliver the world from its sorrow and its slavery. The evil that Baur wrought has passed away ; the good that he did in pointing out the significance of Paul and the records of his experience asserts itself anew in every treatment of his deeds and words. Paul's voice has echoed through the nineteenth century, "I am not a whit behind the other apostles." "I am crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Baur dealt thus with the expanding circle rather than with the centre, Christ. Strauss, on the other hand, sought to find, not the personal nucleus in which Christianity originated, but the mental processes by which the image of Christ had been created through and for the original community that revered His name. "There must," he said, "have arisen a series of sacred narratives fitted to bring vividly before the mind the whole mass of new ideas

started by Jesus, and of old ones applied to Him." Ullmann pointed out immediately that this was an inversion of nature; it was attributing the creation of an historic personality and a flow of personal power to ideas held in solution. It was saying that a feeble intellectual vapour of Judea and Galilee had condensed into the marvellous personality of Christ. Christianity has arrived; it has changed the course of the world; it is now transforming society; it is always assailable, but for ever imperishable; it is corruptible, but purifies itself perpetually; so that the only adequate conception of Christianity involves the unceasing outflow of the personality revealed to the mind in the Gospels and to the spirit by the Holy Ghost. The phases of the conflict that Strauss provoked lie aside from our purpose; but the issue of it concerns us profoundly. Strauss avowed it as his intention to save the dogmas of Christianity. And to do this he was ready to sacrifice the person of its Founder. The result of the conflict has been otherwise. The dogmas have undergone correction; yet Christ Himself has been restored, not as the shadow of theological speculation, but as the "Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us."

This concentration of attention upon the person of Jesus has affected thought in three ways: it has compelled a comparison of Jesus with other founders of religion; it has provoked a closer inquiry into the place of Israel in the world and of Jesus in Israel; and it has forced an investigation into the nature and teachings of Jesus as revealed in the New Testament, and a comparison with all subsequent doctrines taught in His name.

1. The historic Jesus began to emerge from the dust of criticism just as modern missionary enterprises, archæo-

logical investigations, and the expansion of European races united to interest the Occident in the religions of the East. Confucius, Zoroaster, Gautama, Mahomet, ceased to be mere names; and their teachings became, at any rate, more intelligible to us than to preceding generations. The feeling that is traceable in the Greek fathers towards Plato and the Greek philosophers, and that reappeared in Zwingli, displays itself in modern Christian thought towards these remarkable men. Likeness to Jesus is welcomed as a manifestation of the divine spirit; while the contrasts of personality and doctrine stated candidly attest the superiority and the uniqueness of His being. As one among a marvellous group, Jesus may easily be called the Supreme and the Only, and His teachings, contrasted with the rest, as Mr. Romanes points out, are as remarkable for their silence as for their speech.

2. But the relation of Jesus to Israel could not be left untouched—partly because Israel still survives; partly because Jesus Himself made so much of that relation; partly because His disciples in separating themselves from Judaism refused to separate themselves from the revelations made to Israel; partly because the analysis of Hebrew literature and the reconstruction of Jewish history were made inevitable by the historic impulse of the nineteenth century.

Noteworthy indeed is the attitude of Jesus and of Paul toward the Old Testament. They abolish its accidents, establish for ever its spiritual teaching, perfect its ethics, explain and fulfil its predictions, asserting prophetically the extraordinary function of Israel in the education and salvation of the world. Far more remarkable, though, is

the contrast of Jesus and of Paul to the age in which they live. Each explains the other, but the age explains neither ; hence the extravagant attempts that the evolutionists are now making to imagine from fragments of apocalyptic literature an environment by which to explain them both. But, taking Israel as a whole, the relation of Jesus to the national development is manifest enough, nor is our view of it likely to undergo much change. Jesus is not to be spoken of as the result of the Law and the Prophets ; although the effect that His personality and His career produced upon His contemporaries is for ever inseparable from their influence. They created the environment in which He wrought, and this is their chief value. The reconstruction of the successive epochs in which the Hebrew Scriptures were developed is, of course, an enticing enterprise. But it may easily lapse into a tickling of the historic imagination. To make out the interplay of revelation and epoch by reducing both to the requirements of a theory will give us not a spectrum, but a kaleidoscope ; the symmetry of scraps, and not a synthesis of prophetic utterance ; especially when the theory itself, as is the case with evolution, is undergoing continual modification. That the prophets delivered messages of immediate import is true enough ; it could not be otherwise. Jehovah needed a race as well as a book, and the prophets preserved the remnant of His people. But this immediate import has ceased to be of value. It is the permanent import of their speech with which the world is concerned, and this is happily beyond the reach of all analysis. For these divine messengers determined far more than the character of the remnant for the age in which they lived. They uttered truths for all time ; they antici-

pated by centuries the unity of the universe and the unity of history, the energy and the personality of the Invisible. Apprehending the divine holiness and the divine goodness, they seized firmly, if not fully, the divine purpose. Burdened with dread and inspired with expectation, they proclaimed for all ages "the severity and the mercy of God." They developed the conscience and the hope of Israel to which Jesus appealed, and He was their corroboration and fulfilment. In the presence of results like these the inspiration of the Hebrew prophets becomes self-evident; the place of Israel in the education of the world is the place assigned to it by Jesus Himself. "Salvation is of the Jews." The investigations of historians can, at most, lead to a reshaping of the circumstances that surrounded the original appearance of these indestructible monuments of divine revelation. And when a concordant view of Jewish history shall be finally accepted by the reverent scholarship of Christendom, it is safe to say that it will enlarge and enrich rather than obscure and enfeeble our conceptions of Jehovah and His chosen people.

3. Around Jesus, then, the desire of all nations, the religious history of the race, and the history of Israel in particular, are being reshaped. But not around a reminiscence merely. Strauss, following Hegel, thought it quite enough to save the ideas of Christian doctrine. The heart of Christendom recoiled at the suggestion. Men may differ as to the detailed results of New Testament criticism; one thing, though, is clearly apparent. It was the tenacity with which the believer in the living Christ fought for the records of his Master's earthly career that drove the critics step by step from the end of the second

back to the first century. Even in history the heart asserts its rights. It fights for its beloved always. And this instinct is divine, however it may be abused. Thus only can the realities be saved when they are attacked by ruthless and irreverent hands. The suggestion of Strauss, to accept a schedule of propositions as a substitute for the historic Jesus and the living Christ caused, of course, a panic. But it did more. It awakened all thoughtful Christians to the blunders of theology. For the schedule of propositions that Strauss would have enthroned formally and openly had already usurped the place of Jesus in too many schemes of doctrine. And only a few teachers appreciated the necessity of holding together the memories of the evangelists with the experience of the risen Christ within the soul. The shock was severe, but beneficent. It was like the terror of the storm that shook from the disciples their despairing cry, "Master, save us, or we perish." But it gave us back the voice of our Beloved, with its thrilling tones of blended God and man, and it forced upon historic theology the task of self-explanation. Men and women began to read the Gospels in the spirit of those to whom they were first addressed, and to recover and discover their Messiah. The indestructible charm of the narratives resumed its sway; Jesus, as He appeared to the primitive disciples, reappeared to the modern world. The Gospels were not the four sides of an empty tomb; they became, again, the outer courts to the holy of holies, the splendid introduction to the invisible but enthroned Christ. Each explained the other to our worshipping souls. And we demanded of the historian a tranquil study of the thought which in the course of centuries had clustered about them both,

and which had made of the Jesus of Bethany, the Judex Christus of the Middle Ages, and of the Christ of Paul, the metaphysical necessity of Anselmic misconception.

Here, then, I reach my third and final conclusion: the reaction against the unhistoric spirit of the eighteenth century and its contempt for the past has been restrained, guided, transfigured by actual experience. In our historical reconstructions, the life of to-day is the clue and interpreter of the ancient documents and monuments. Neither the romanticists, the positivists, nor the evolutionists have conquered the archives of antiquity to work their will upon them; these belong for ever to the living societies that the ancient heroes have created; and they will remain in the living temples, where alone the tablets of past achievements can be rightly interpreted. John Richard Green declared the genius of modern scientific history when he proclaimed the London of Victoria to be the explanation of the London of Richard II., and the England of Tennyson to hold the secret of the England of Chaucer and of Wyclif. And this is especially true of the archives of Christianity. Sunder them from the communion of saints, and their meaning begins to disappear. They are in danger of destruction, mutilation, misinterpretation, only as the saints become few and feeble, scant of mind and slow of heart, achieving little and expecting nothing. As, however, the communion of saints grows larger and diviner these archives will more and more determine the development of theology. The latter will, doubtless, become simpler, at once more scientific and more biblical. False conceptions that still linger and lurk in current doctrine will be traced, phase by phase, to their human origin,

and perish when exposed. As these disappear, the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints will stand forth unobscured and unimpaired. The teachings of the Master and His apostles, illuminated by the glow of a redeemed intelligence, will be verified by continual experiment, and little children will learn the power of Christ from concrete images of Him in history, in contemporary society, and in the home. The conceptions of Him that shall be accepted will be more fruitful than those displaced, because each succeeding generation will see Him more clearly as He is.

On every hand there is a moaning about the instability and the mobility of modern thought. We have put out to sea, and complain of the billows. We asked for knowledge, and we complain of fluctuation. Mobility is almost a name for life ; knowledge, at any rate, has been the discovery of universal mobility. The sky is no longer a solid firmament with riveted stars ; it is a measureless immensity in which the mighty marshal gathers countless atoms into rolling globes, and where the outspread ether vibrates perpetually through interstellar spaces to the thrill of radiant energy. The everlasting hills yield slowly to the avalanche and glacier that destroy them, but the stubborn cliff conceals the perpetual play of molecules on which its permanence depends. The waving trees that bend before the wind are but arboreal particles that lift themselves from root to crest, and in their ceaseless interchange of station make of branch and foliage the fountains through whose outspreading green the sunshine flashes with incredible rapidity.

Knowledge, I repeat, is the discovery of mobility, where we imagined things were stable. Occasionally some daring

thinker like Michael Faraday utters a suspicion that behind all this apparent movement there is something that does not move, that the lines of energy are infinite and rigid, and that some day our children will discover external permanence. It may be so. But more probably our children will feel, quite as keenly as their fathers, that the things which are seen are temporal. Happy, indeed, if they feel more exultingly than we that the unseen things abide! Accepting in that case this universal mobility as the order of God, they will cease to be alarmed at their increasing perception of it, in nature or in society or in human thought. On the contrary, they will look confidently and continually for a new heaven and a new earth, for a correcter history, a nobler science, a more clearly apprehended Christ, and a diviner humanity; chanting as they labour for the coming of the kingdom, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

III

THE LEAVEN AND THE LUMP

CHRISTIANITY, the Christianity of experience, is a progressive conquest of a hostile environment ; it is the kingdom of Christ within a world that denies His sovereignty. As John Wesley pointed out, we cherish a delusion when we speak of Christian nations. The Commonwealth of God must be distinguished always from the imperial dominion within which it operates. And the question of its transforming efficiency is, to speak strictly, a problem of quantitative induction. The mystery of evil is unfathomable ; the Christian's duty is not to explain but to abolish it, to overcome evil with good. Each age has been prolific in wickedness ; old and new brands of it. Christianity is a divine counter-agency for the production of righteousness ; and all other agencies for its production are the allies of Christianity. In solving our problem, therefore, we must be just to our allies ; we must recognize gratefully whatever is contributed by the nobler forces of the civilization inside of which the Spirit of Christ is operating. Law, literature, art, science, the industrial order, are not directly the creations of Christianity ; nor is the general movement of the human or the civilized world. These, however, are subject to the divine will ; accordingly they present new oppor-

tunities and new difficulties to the Christian intelligence and the Christian courage of each generation.

And never have these opportunities and these difficulties been more surprising than in the nineteenth century. Before attempting, though, to depict the conflict of Christianity with the oppositions of the age, it is well to remember the perennial conflict of Christianity with the carnal spirit of all the ages, and to remind ourselves that we must measure the conquests of Christianity by what it retains as well as by what it subdues.

Mr. Kidd, for instance, quotes with approval a remarkable passage from Professor Marshall touching the influence of the Reformation upon the English character. "The family relations of those races which have adopted the reformed religion are the richest and fullest of earthly feeling ; there never has been before any material of texture at once so strong and so fine with which to build up a noble fabric of social life." These, however, are but one set of the relations sanctified and enriched by Christian living and thinking. And that they have endured the poisonous analysis of the nineteenth century is surely a triumph of the Christian conscience. The purity of thought, the entire self-forgetfulness of love, which are the core of Christianity, are a guarantee of domestic perfection ; so, too, the promise of eternal life that illuminates the affections of the household with the glow of sublime and indestructible hopes. And as Christianity has ennobled, and tends by its very nature to ennoble and to preserve, the family, so it tends to ennoble and sanctify every form of social activity. But, as in the family, it deals with what it finds, and its workings are recondite and noiseless. Hence it is

only when we examine some great breadth of result over some large space of time that we appreciate its effects, as only in the seasons and the cycles we discern the ceaseless movement of the globe. Accordingly we may, perhaps, detect the influences of Christianity in the science and the statutes, in the literature and the moral ideals, of the century now closing; especially if we look for this influence in that which may be deemed with safety a contribution to the welfare of the world and the future.

Buckle, in his *History of Civilization*, ascribed all progress to the increase of knowledge. He expounded with elaborate erudition the theory that moral truth was constant and intellectual truth was variable; of course, then, the effect must be due to the accelerated force. How plausible, and yet how absurd! Correct ideas will not apply themselves; if they did, the mere proclamation of the decalogue would have saved the world! Moral truth is simple and stable enough; but it is the surest to be rejected and despised of men. On the other hand, where moral energy is feeble, science pines and withers. Nothing, to be sure, is more deplorable than the warfare made upon science frequently in the name of Jesus Christ, unless it be the warfare made upon God and religion in the name of science. The quest for truth is a quest for the Holy Grail; the discovery of a truth is a glimpse of God; the application of a truth is a part of the redemption of mankind. But these assaults of the narrow-minded upon the seekers of reality ought not to blind the latter to the sources of their own inspiration. The modern reverence for truth, nay the modern search for truth, is something quite different from the Greek delight in mental activity. The Hellenic

intellect revelled in a glorious play, in magnificent exhibitions of speculative daring and dialectic ingenuity. Lessing is the last of modern giants to confess openly his adhesion to the Hellenic conception, that the seeking is more glorious than the finding. The Christian conception is at once humbler and nobler. The love of reality is a virtue. To find the secret of the possible in the study of the actual—this is the Christian conception of truth, and this is the goal of modern science. To die for what they knew, to die rather than deny their own souls—this was the teaching of Jesus and of Paul. And until this teaching finds disciples, there is little hope for genuine knowledge. To beware of the idle word, to search and not to guess, to call nothing common or unclean, this too vibrates through the New Testament.

Consider, too, another thing. Science without brotherly kindness may easily become, nay has tended in our own time to become, a fountain of innumerable woes! The material aspect of the globe has changed in the nineteenth century. The ingenuity and energy of the dominant races have made vapours mightier than the waves, have scarred the mountains' flanks with highways for international trade, have created methods of production that are fabulous in their fecundity, and multiplied the wealth of the world a thousand-fold. But a marked tendency of this transformation has been to degrade science into the slave of the commercial lamp, to convert thought into commodity, the soul into material environment, the activities of life into the activities of industrial production and exchange. Tolstoi's arraignment of science is not wholly unwarranted; science has not been altogether

glad tidings to the poor. Nevertheless, there has been a sublime resistance to this tendency, all the sublimer because of the unnatural hostility that scientists have frequently encountered. Not everyone indeed has resisted; mammon has made conspicuous victims. But unselfishness, intrepidity, and conscientiousness, indefatigable patience and philanthropic purpose have done much to redeem science from reproach; and these are virtues of the soul, not of the intellect. Knowledge, like every form of power, is a benison only if wielded by the benevolent. Few passages in modern scientific literature are more touching than the one in which Helmholtz describes the feelings of the conscientious physician, reviewing the causes of his failure, and pledging his soul to further and more ardent research!

Now, this love of the truth for its own sake and for its value to the human race, this divine craving to see things as they are and to make things all that they might be, flows into the modern world from the mind and heart of Jesus Christ. Consciously or unconsciously, men of science are animated by His spirit; when looking out over the creation that groans and travails together in pain, they make their solemn vow to God in the spirit of Charles Wesley's hymn:

'Tis love that drives my chariot wheels,
And death must yield to love.

A catalogue of Christian believers among the scientific giants of the nineteenth century might easily be made, and it would be adorned with many illustrious names; for the ranks of research are recruited chiefly from Christian

households where the New Testament replenishes with its sublimities the love of truth and the love of humanity. But quite apart from this there is at the heart of modern science an impulse derived from centuries of Christian influence. This makes men hate lies ; this upholds them in their search for reality ; this overcomes the materialistic and the mercenary spirit that would exploit all discovery and all intelligence for base and private uses. And when this impulse expires, science herself will perish from the earth.

If, now, it be urged that recent science has been irreligious and anti-Christian, it must be noted :

1. That one of the chief victories of the nineteenth century is the conviction that all serious inquiry into nature is a form of worship. Hence science properly pursued can never be irreligious. The quest of truth is a quest of the Holy Grail. Yet one must concede, with James Martineau, the obtrusive presence of a very arrogant agnosticism that worships "darkness visible." Any truth may be turned into a lie ; any discovery may be mixed with hypotheses and inferences, unwarranted and pernicious. And this use of scientific material is both unscientific and irreligious. No utterance of Jesus should be pondered oftener by philosopher and theologian than this : "Blessed are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth." All Bacon's noblest aphorisms are reducible to that.

Science has no wings ; it is the humility of inquiry climbing resolutely and slowly towards Him that dwelleth in the light unapproachable. But the polemical energy of the Teuton has filled the modern world with controversy. All the sciences, theology along with the rest, need trans-

figuration. Rancour must cease to poison discussion. Powerful minds must assemble around the same table and humbly help each other in the solution of earnest problems. Tolerance and earnestness must kiss each other. Wrestling thus with God for His secret will develop a humbler yet a mightier Israel ; the science of the future may halt upon its thigh, but be nevertheless a prince with power to prevail.

2. No theories now regnant in the scientific world are necessarily irreligious or anti-Christian. As they have been used irreligiously, so too have they been denounced unwisely. The theologian has been feverish and impatient ; whereas he ought to be confident and serene. And earnest thinkers are bewildered by this evident panic. It is, moreover, quite possible for scientists like Romanes to mistake the bearing of their principles and to wander for a season into the regions of agnostic cold and night. A closer scrutiny, however, leads them, as it did him, to discover that science and theology are names for directions only—the two directions by which to approach the same radiant reality, the same Father of Lights. Whoso desires always sunrise in his world must travel east or west ; the other way round the globe leads to polar ice and darkness and no thoroughfare ! and this way is chosen often by scientist and theologian ; by the former when he scoffs at religion, and by the latter when he rails at inquiry. But the great theories of recent science, the theories of energy and evolution, do not compel us to lose our souls that road. These theories have been accepted by minds as devout as they were daring ; by Michael Faraday and Clerk-Maxwell and Asa Gray. These giants were not driven towards the agnostic poles.

They kept within the region of the ever-returning sun, and calmly refashioned the propositions they employed, as every master-workman does, for more efficient use.

3. Theology has discovered that she too is an imperfect science; that she had much to lose as well as to gain in this attrition with new and powerful ideas. The wind and the earthquake are over; we can hear already the still small voice. Materialism as a system of philosophy is extinct; German and English thinkers are returning to a sober doctrine of intuition and experience; and the conscience of Christendom revolts at the employment of the theories of energy and evolution for the destruction of Christian ethics and Christian hope, for the abolition of prayer and the effacement of personality from our conception of God. On the other hand, theology is humbler for its frequent chastening. We know far less than the Tridentine Fathers or the Westminster divines. We are ready almost for Bishop Hall's treatise, *de paucitate credendorum*, on the few beliefs that are necessary to salvation. But the loss has been of bulk and not of power, like the loss of a diamond in the hands of a lapidary. If we do not believe so many things about God, our conceptions of Him are nobler and truer. And these conceptions are the inner splendour of theology, which has been brought to light by the cutting severities of modern controversy.

Let us turn now from science to politics, and look for traces of the mind of Jesus Christ. It may be prudent, however, to note at the outset that the distinctive characteristics of the Christianity of experience in our century, at least its conspicuous public characteristics, have been the missionary and the philanthropic impulses. William Carey,

Thomas Coke, John Howard, Elizabeth Fry, Thomas Chalmers, were the heralds of the movements which are the glory of this later time. Politically, however, the era has been one of consolidation and expansion, of revolution and the increase of popular power, of intense national feeling and unexampled international intercourse. It has been an era also of the transfer of power from the Latin to the Teutonic and the Slavonic races. Now the latter are noted for their aggressive energy or their stealthy fortitude, for Bersekir rage or silent endurance. Their concord, of course, would be the harmony of the world; the sovereignty among them of noble ideals would mean the welfare of mankind. Moreover, while the political aspect of the globe has been changing, the surface of the earth has been transformed. And with the enormous development of power and of wealth there has been an appalling development of greed. Men and nations are eager to gain the whole world. Side by side with the private avarice that invents schemes to increase the riches of the individual there has developed a popular rapacity that demands clamorously and staggers wildly towards an earthly paradise. Here, then, the issue is joined. The missionary and philanthropic impulses of modern Christianity are challenged to a deadly struggle with the carnal mind. A battle of belief and unbelief is surely impending; but it is to be a battle of essential Christianity with the ancient enemy, with the idolatrous worship of the flesh that darkens the face of God and silences the voice of Christ. These missionary and philanthropic impulses developed, as we all know, quite independently of the political situation. The coincidence is in the plan of God. Humble Moravians

like Peter Böhler, missionaries like Schwartz and Kiernander, Coke and Carey, Wesley and Howard, cared little for the expansion of earthly kingdoms. They were indeed patriots, and noble ones, like Livingstone and Duff; but they were citizens of Christ's kingdom also, and their chief aim was to extend *it*. God's purpose, however, included something more. He intended to develop in these expanding nations a sense of responsibility for the welfare of humanity, and especially for the welfare of the conquered, which would save them and the nations that ruled them from the miseries and blunders of selfishness. Now, to exaggerate the amount of this missionary and philanthropic sentiment in the Christian world would be a wrong to the helpless and the injured. It could be multiplied a thousand-fold and then be none too large. But it exists; it grows; it challenges iniquity; it lifts the banner of Christ for the protection of the weak. The records of the English Parliament disclose the influence of men like Duff upon the administration of India, and the influence of men like Livingstone upon the abolition of the slave trade. The records of the United States reveal the influence of men like the intrepid Bishop Whipple in dealing with the aborigines. If the achievements have not been greater and nobler, it is because this form of Christianity must offer its cheek so frequently to mockery and insult. It is scoffed at as folly and derided as delusion. And after wearing itself out against the stolidity of the stupid-wise and the hostility of the malignant-cunning, it is adored by the whole world in such forms as Livingstone and Gordon. But it is not delusion; it is the wisdom and the power of God. And woe to the nation without its righteous men! To such expansion means

destruction. But where the missionary and philanthropic impulses are genuine and intelligent, where they become incarnate in the strongest minds and the most resolute spirits of the commonwealth, there the extension of dominion means the extension of faith, hope, and love.

Examine next the dealings of nations with each other. Surely there is much in the history of the nineteenth century to deplore and to condemn—blunders and crimes and cruel waste of blood. But the shameless political immorality of the former age has certainly been mitigated. The character of a nation changes slowly; even more slowly the character of a race. We must expect, therefore, frequent eruptions of Bersekir rage wherever Teutonic energy predominates; and we must expect to hear elaborate demonstration of their beneficial effects from those to whom the Darwinian formula means the righteousness of strength and the divinity of cunning. The “cankers of a long peace” doubtless befall any people whose only heroism is the heroism of war; and there will hardly be surcease of international conflict until a beneficent courage, a divine enthusiasm for righteousness, transfigures this ancient form of manhood. Conceding frankly, then, the tendencies to conflict always imminent in modern nations, let us note gratefully the other influences that have been growing steadily.

1. The influence of international law, that great contribution of the Christian thinker Grotius to the welfare of mankind.

2. The gradual displacement of the love of war by a national conscience which makes of an unrighteous war a crime.

3. The rudimentary development of diviner ideals of national destiny.

Granted that the latter are imperfect, that the national conscience is as yet feeble, that the ideals of national destiny are still predominantly selfish, and that the nobler ideals of Christian manhood have found but few exemplars ; nevertheless they exist, they are forms of the century in which we live, they have produced some of its noblest deliverances and sublimest deeds. To cite but a single page of modern history, which, whether read with admiration or with contempt, is sure to provoke the astonishment of the future,—the arbitration treaty between the British Empire and the American Republic. It was in both countries ratified under the pressure of the Higher Law. In each country there were those who looked upon it as a blunder, and not a few scoffed at it as hypocritical cowardice hiding behind the Sermon on the Mount. Napoleon's sneer about a nation of shopkeepers comes easily to the pen of irresponsible critics, and a sublime instance of national self-restraint could not escape their jibes. But they did their countrymen a wrong. Commercial greed may carry a nation into war ; it has, though, never been strong enough to keep an excited people out of it. The national conscience had really far more to do with this great victory of peace than avarice or dread of consequences. The nations yielded not to each other ; they bowed to the majesty too seldom recognized and too often blasphemed, the law of human brotherhood.

Passing now from the relations of nations to conquered races and to each other, mark the traces of Christian influence in the internal administration of the Western World.

The statutes of the nineteenth century are a curious study—curious in what they abolish and in what they create. The death penalties, the prison cruelties, the merciless hard-heartedness of the former century have been disappearing; laws to prevent hardships and to restrain brutality, the beginnings of legislative benevolence, have taken their place. Advised or ill-advised, there is no mistaking the spirit of this legislation. And even unchristian thinkers are quick to perceive that it is threatened by the carnal reading of the Darwinian formula. Prince Kropótkine, for instance, challenges Professor Huxley's programme as unscientific *because* it is selfish, and sets himself bravely to work to wrest the new weapon from the hands of the oppressor. Huxley's article of 1888 he describes as atrocious, as raising the cry "Woe to the Weak" to a commandment of nature and the dignity of a religion. "Mutual Aid," he undertakes to demonstrate, "is as much a law of nature as mutual struggle; but for the *progressive* evolution of the species the former is far more important than the latter." Whether the Russian scientist has proved his case, I am hardly competent to judge. Two things, however, are clear enough. The impulse to prove it came from the persistence of Christian ideas, and the demonstration, if perfect, would only corroborate the ethics of the New Testament—that the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. Mr. Kidd's contention throughout his treatise on *Social Evolution* is that the impulse to beneficent legislation is religious and distinctly Christian; and he would doubtless say, with Prince Kropótkine, "that the resistance which such legislation will meet in the privileged classes can hardly have the character of obtuse obstinacy that

provoked the revolutions of the past." In other words, the ethical principle (not the ethics merely) of Christianity, the divinity of self-sacrifice, the becoming poor that others may become rich, is the animating principle of modern reform, and the only service that the intellect can render is to find the perfect methods for the redemption of the world.

To enumerate all the statutes that bear witness of the Christian spirit would be unnecessary. It will be enough to select from among them those relating to slavery and labour.

During the nineteenth century slavery and serfdom have been abolished in their last strongholds, America and Russia. It is easy to attribute this to the edicts of President and Czar, to the example of Prussia and of England, to the emergencies of an internecine struggle or to the terror produced by threatened revolution, to the appeals of agitators or to the conviction that compulsory labour is economic folly. All these were, doubtless, factors in the product. It is, moreover, true that the Bible was appealed to in defence of slavery, and that Christian preachers discovered for it a divine sanction. The children of God had their temptation and their opportunity. There were those who succumbed; there were those who triumphed gloriously. But the ruin of slavery was wrought by the conscience of Christendom. Wherever it could be discussed it was sure to be condemned. And the doom of it was swift and dreadful, directly discussion of it was forbidden as a crime. For the Christian conscience would not be silent. In America ecclesiastical organizations were rent in twain; households were divided; homes were

abandoned ; careers were sacrificed ; the great ark of the American people, the Federal Union itself, was carried finally into the controversy, because thousands answered to the summons :

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me,
As He died to make men holy let us die to make men free.
Our God is marching on.

It is more difficult, of course, to determine the causes of emancipation in Russia. But he reads Russian literature to little purpose who fails to perceive the intense, the almost fanatical, sympathy of the Russian genius for the poor and the oppressed. Whence has it been derived ? “ All the sonorous phrases about making mankind progress, while the progress-makers stand aloof from those whom they pretend to push onwards, are mere sophisms made up by minds anxious to shake off a fretting contradiction ! ” These words of a Russian revolutionary could be matched from John Wesley and St. Paul. They contain the ethical principle of the gospel. They are a paraphrase of the declaration, “ The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.” And is it without significance that the article in which the Russian Herzen greeted the intention of Alexander II. to abolish serfdom was entitled, “ Thou hast conquered, Galilean ” ?

The abolition of slavery and serfdom meant much for mankind ; but the world learns slowly that a change of *status* is not a change of character. The freedom intended for a boon may be converted into a bane, especially if “ Woe to the Weak ” becomes the watchword of the strong. The industrial legislation of the modern State is, therefore,

deeply significant. Whatever may be its effect, its avowed object is to protect the feeble. The older theory of the Government, that the State exists solely for the protection of property and privilege, has been quietly displaced by the theory that the State exists for the promotion of the general welfare. Not even the greatest-happiness principle, at which Carlyle railed, is quite sufficient for our time. We are moving towards the doctrine of Jesus, that the hundredth sheep is entitled to the kindness of the shepherd. The child in the factory, the woman in the bleaching-room, the worker in the mine, have become the objects of legislative inquiry and of governmental care. Legislators may differ as to the details or the wisdom of such enactments, but those who urge them and those who oppose them argue from the same principle; the statute must promote the general welfare, and it must not increase the sorrows and hardships of the poor. For whatever may be men's motives, the Christian conscience will tolerate no other avowals. The brutal utterances of selfishness no longer pass unchallenged. The figure of Lord Shaftesbury shapes itself to our minds whenever a theme like this is treated. And how absurd does the *Zeitgeist* seem when confronted with such an angel of the living God! It was literally a case of one chasing a thousand, of the foolishness of God against the wisdom of men. The England of the nineteenth century may have more splendid figures; it has none nobler. In him was blended the sagacity of love with the perseverance of faith, the courage and devotion of chivalry with the patience, the tenderness, the fortitude of Jesus Christ. He had, indeed, the mind of the Master, and applied with sublime confidence to the legislation of a great kingdom

the principle that statesmen continue to reject, although it crushes so many upon whom it falls: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and the other things will be added to you!"

To look for Christian influence in the literature of the nineteenth century will seem to many sheer perversity. For to these it appears to be a tumbling whirl of intellectual splendour. But when studied tranquilly, it reveals four striking characteristics:

1. The great personalities of our literature have been, with few exceptions, the children of Christian homes.

2. The sceptical writers of our age have lost faith in reason as a saviour and have taken refuge in the conscience.

3. The hostile and exultant tone of the eighteenth century has softened to a bewildered lamentation; a merciless realism has created a world of gloom and has made of imagination the handmaid of despair.

4. In the literature of the nineteenth century that is likely to influence posterity there is an unmistakable Christian note.

Wordsworth, Macaulay, Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, the Brownings, the Brontës, Marian Evans, not to speak of others, breathed the atmosphere of faith in childhood. Tolstoi has traced for us the phases of his early religious development. Björnson was the son of a Norwegian pastor, and Ibsen's mother was a disciple of that remarkable Norwegian martyr, Hans Nielson Hauge. The moral *momentum* of these remarkable writers is, therefore, not difficult to explain. But the tumbling chaos of intellectual splendour is due to the confluence of this moral *momentum* of Christian life with the powerful

currents of the former century. Rationalism, Scepticism, Romanticism, the Christianity of Experience, have all flowed into the steep and narrow channel of Realism, and formed a spectacle at once beautiful and terrible. For, accuse our later literature as we may, in its wildest forms it is restrained, and in its nobler forms it is inspired by a reverence for reality. This produces startling results in writers like George Eliot and Ibsen, who were profoundly moved in youth by religious influences, and in their maturity became the drudges of despair. These poets without God found themselves bereft of hope; yet they were acutely sensitive to human pain. The misery of the world could not longer be attacked with the former buoyant expectation. All that was left them was to describe it. The diffused perception of it might lead to its extermination. They were too human to find comfort in the possible advent of Huxley's friendly comet; such a vaporous Messiah is but a tissue-paper figure in the pathway of an actual world. The old world rolls through it without the diminution of a groan. To terribly earnest natures like Ibsen and Marian Evans there was nothing left but duty, duty the offspring and the consoler of grief. Mr. Arnold and his children of light found for themselves an island of sweet reasonableness in the midst of the tumult and the sorrow, and discoursed serenely upon the folly of the Philistine, creating a new Christ for the cultured who would save them from vulgarity and give them a holiness without God. But "the stream of tendency" could not make him less forlorn.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest his head.

George Eliot and Ibsen, however, knew that their sky was empty and that their stars were dumb. Duty survived, they insisted, though deity was dead ! They sought neither pillows nor opium for their aching temples. The individual conscience remained. "Let each assert himself and conquer, defying every alien authority natural or supernatural. Let him dare to be lonely ; he would find a kindred soul in his isolation, or, if not, he would have at least the joy of self-assertion." Only both writers were compelled to acknowledge that few dare make the venture, and that the venture leads to tragedy. The sombre figures of Ibsen's genius are doomed to defeat ; the strongest of them are too weak for their entanglements ; the leaden shadows of the past and the cruel tyranny of the present dwarf and cripple every high resolve. George Eliot, on the other hand, expected to diminish the tragedy of the world by modifying the action of the individual. By depicting the forms and causes of wretchedness she thought to make the heartache universal, and thus to create rebellion against whatever crushes the soul or poisons happiness. And, therefore, she delineated with remorseless fidelity the interplay of speech and conduct in the ruin of soul and the ruin of home. And as she receded from the faith of her girlhood, the gloom deepened and the sorrows of hell took hold of her. God was gone ; life had shrunk to a span ; pain and relief, love and sorrow, to be sure, remained. One mandate only made itself heard above the swing of atoms and through the quiver of nerves : "See that thy neighbour does not suffer from thine ignorant and selfish action."

Carlyle and Emerson might hold aloof from all this ; but at the core of their hearts they had

no other message. Do the duty nearest thee; find the warrant and the vindication of it in thine innermost being. Abolish sham! Revere the verities! Abolish convention! Revere thine own soul! Abolish misery! Revere humanity! Thus saith the voice of the Ages, that our fathers called the voice of God! Ruskin, indeed, had drunk too deep of the ancient fountain ever to be satisfied with broken cisterns. The Spirit of the Most High had greeted him too often from sunlit cloud and glowing snowpeak, from creeping glacier and rushing waterfall, murmuring tree-tops and tumbling billow; the truths of revelation had been echoed too often in the deeps of his own soul as he pondered the secrets of humanity and vibrated to the moan of contemporary misery. And so, to the last, we see him clutching the garment of the living God. But it was otherwise with Carlyle and Emerson. Really, we should begin the new century with heavy hearts if we accepted heedlessly their understanding of the prophet's message. If, like Carlyle, we flung away our hopes, as old Jewish rags, we should soon fling after them his moral mandates. It was, indeed, kind in Mr. Arnold to approve the decalogue and to reward with his praise the moral earnestness of Israel. But why should Carlyle be so earnest about these wrappings of the vanished Jehovah? Why not reject them also? The answer is simple enough: the genius of the nineteenth century has uttered prophecy under the stress of a spirit which it could neither resist nor understand,—Wordsworth and Ruskin in their recognition of the beauty of God and of eternal truth in nature; Victor Hugo and Tolstoi in their sympathy with *Les Misérables*; Carlyle in his proclamation of veracity as the law

of life ; Ibsen in his revelation of the eternal conflict between the flesh and the spirit ; Emerson in his insistence upon truth in the inward parts ; and the latest writers of Germany, Gerard Hauptmann and Max Kretzner, in their pathetic efforts to restore through the imagination a living Christ to a suffering world.

Aristotle spoke profoundly when he declared that poetry has a higher truth than history, a view that Tennyson seems to have accepted. The reason is obvious enough. Poetry, the inspired poetry of genius, is the transfiguration of reality. The poet, living as he does near to the heart of humanity, feels instantly its shudder and recoil when the vital centres are attacked. Divinely aware of the forms and possibilities of experience, the poet knows, too, the truths that nourish them, the sources from which they are derived, and without which they pine away and perish. Happy, therefore, is the people to whom their poet-prophets are given ! For these accept the task of guarding the realities of history, until the criticism that threatens to mutilate and destroy them returns to sanity and self-restraint. But such poetry is effective only because it defends the highest interests of the soul, because it protects the beliefs that replenish perpetually the springs of virtue and of brotherly endeavour. Hence its creations are always held close to the actual, by the experience, by the spiritual life, which it defends. Fortunately for the English-speaking world of the nineteenth century, the three spiritual poets of our language, Tennyson, Browning, and Whittier, have been quite consciously radiant with the life and light of men. The heart-break of *In Memoriam* with its undertone of majestic expectation,

the sublime defiance of *Prospice*, the celestial sweetness of Eternal Hope, have solaced and strengthened the Queen upon her lonely throne and the dying orphan on the hospital cot. This has been indeed a precious service. But they have rendered a nobler one; they have grasped more divinely than the theologians the meaning of the Incarnation, and illustrated it in forms of inspired invention. And the greater the influence of these poets, because of their matchless intellectual courage. Tennyson, especially, challenged boldly every discovery of science and every speculation of philosophy; his fidelity to truth, the simple magic of which, when exerted patiently, translated the beauty of the billows and the glory of the hillsides into imperishable lines, forbade all shifts and evasions when treating of the experience and expectations of humanity, and made him at once the bravest, deepest, truest poet-thinker and poet-prophet of the time. But this same fidelity to truth made him wary and long-suffering and unyielding. No artist ever taught more nobly the divinity of self-restraint. If the vision tarried, he waited for it. He fought his doubts; after he had conquered them he depicted the struggle and the victory. It was the tranquil procedure of the sage controlling the creative energy of genius. He bestrode no Pegasus; he watched, and prayed, and listened. And for his reward he had the vision of his Pilot when he crossed the bar, whom he saw not for himself only but for us also who love His appearing.

Yet, after all, Science, Politics, Literature, however they may affect the welfare of all, excite the conscious interest of the smaller number only. Not so the commercial, the industrial, the social system; these involve directly all

households, entangling the children in their coils. And if the Christianity of the nineteenth century would vindicate itself, it must reveal its presence in them also. In touching upon this difficult discussion, let us in the first place separate all purely philanthropic enterprise from the larger problem of the development of the industrial classes. The extent, the diversity, the beauty of it are easily apparent. Hospital, infirmary, asylums for the orphan, homes for the aged, social settlements, schools for the ignorant—how numerous the forms of brotherly kindness! Certainly, as is often urged, we are bound, if we can construct it, to establish a system from which disease and defect and poverty shall be eliminated. But meanwhile something must be done immediately for their relief. That the philanthropic impulse thrills the unbelieving heart is conceded frankly. It is a part of this argument. But the philanthropic impulses that are coping more or less intelligently with the ruin wrought by recent civilization are not the products of agnosticism. They are the outflow of a clearer conception of Christ and His kingdom; heroic efforts to enrich impoverished lives, as He did, by dwelling among them; a revival of the hope of heaven by doing the will of God on earth. And it is difficult to see whence the motive for this kind of activity can be derived after “Woe to the Weak” has been proclaimed as the eleventh commandment. And a strange irony is now compelling those who have exulted in its proclamation to beseech the disciples of Jesus to maintain and exemplify the precepts of the Master, they failing to find another warrant for them! Nevertheless the philanthropic activities of our century are not enough to vindicate our Christianity as a gospel for the poor. John

Wesley saw more clearly into the modern problem; he saw that religion made men prosperous, but that prosperity tended to destroy their religion; that covetousness is the modern form of idolatry; and that the chief difficulty of a living Church is to sanctify the activities of everyday life. This difficulty has been increased in the nineteenth century by a pernicious theory and a tremendous fact—the theory of *laissez faire* and the subjugation of men to machinery. *Laissez faire* existed in two forms, the cheerful and the dismal. Attempts to better things were decried on the one hand because they were needless, on the other because they were useless. The cheerful enthusiasts for liberty, like Buckle, expected salvation from the abolition of the protective spirit. Whately, and afterwards Bastiat, delineated with joy the automatic harmonies of the industrial world whereby the selfishness of individuals co-operated sweetly for the common good. But the dismal prophets were also numerous: Malthus, conspicuously urging the smallness of the globe, the scantiness of food, and the fecundity of the human species; and there followed him a vociferous company proclaiming the mandates of economic law. Professor Marshall has attributed the perversion of political economy to the hangers-on of the science. The excuse is hardly valid. Not a few great names gave sanction to the idolatry of selfishness. Now, as Wesley foresaw, piety was followed by prosperity; if not in the parents, then in the children. Many of the new race of undertakers in both Europe and America came from homes where power followed faith. But these resolute and daring natures forgot the pit whence they were digged. They attributed to their own industry and thrift and self-

will the prosperity which was due to their moral advantages and to their superior endowments. Prone to think that their success was their own, they accepted cheerfully the science that taught them to glorify individualism, that ascribed their neighbour's poverty to his own folly and to the decree of God, and that released them from all responsibility for obvious misery. And thus an inchoate but arrogant science poisoned the outflow of the Rock of Salvation that had been struck so bravely by the Christian faith of the eighteenth century. A worse time for such a doctrine was hardly possible. The development of machinery was destroying the individual craftsman. Eager, thrifty, intelligent undertakers created great plants and gathered to them rapidly the new species of workman. The Stock Company appeared, by means of which one could wield the resources of a hundred. The employer was separated from the owners of his plant, from the producers of his wares, from the buyer of his commodities. He must compete for remote markets, and in order to make profits for invisible owners he must coin them, he thought, from the sweat of faces whose names were numbers only. And the sweet refrain of *laissez faire*,

God's in His heaven,
All's right with the world,

drove ugly recollections from his pillow.

Two influences have changed the situation ; the one scientific, the other religious. Malthus begat Darwin. And Darwin, to his own surprise, challenged the assumption upon which the existing Political Economy rested. His fable needed no appended moral. The animal and the environment transform each other. Woe to the animal,

individual, or species who submits tamely to his surroundings ! Man's character and efficiency are not fixed quantities ; they are determined by the social system and the physical world in which he lives. The latter is subject partly, the former wholly, to his will. Therefore, let him rise in his might and abolish what destroys him. There were, of course, other influences that tended to this challenge of the social system. But the scientific influence was the most decisive. For Science when it reaches the masses loses its purely intellectual character ; it then becomes a pressure or an impulse. It holds the masses down or urges them forward. And thus the doctrine of the struggle for life drives men together and drives them asunder. It provokes conflict ; it inspires combination. It reproduces tribal feeling inside the civilized states. It arrays masses against classes. It promises progress ; it threatens extermination. It preaches reconciliation ; and breathes revolution. It challenges all that exists in the name of all that suffer. It parades the successful as the darlings of Nature ; it provokes the unfortunate to ceaseless arraignment and assault of the institutions which, as they declare, lead to such stupid results of artificial selection. But coincident with this scientific influence came an ethical awakening among the disciples of Christ. It was a revival of the primitive conscience reinforced by the voice of Jesus Christ, " Am I my brother's keeper ? " " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Quite suddenly these conscience-stricken Christians became aware that the Day of Judgment is not to be an examination in Political Economy, but a scrutiny into human conduct and its consequences, and that it has already begun. The triumphant struggle of

Lord Shaftesbury is a noble but pathetic page in English history. A misguided enthusiasm for individual liberty deprived him of his natural allies. And after the victory these bemoaned the blunder. They would not like to make another.

Assailed thus from either hand, the Christian thinker may lose his tranquillity and his insight. He may recognize his Master's voice and yet mistake his Master's meaning. He may repeat the error of all the ages, he may accept the *Zeitgeist* for the Spirit of God. He may suffer the kingdom of Christ to dwindle to an earthly society with a limited horizon, the restored Redeemer to fade away into an historical suggestion for an ideal manhood, salvation to shrink to an antiseptic for social bruises, and the New Jerusalem to a bread-and-butter paradise. That were, indeed, the great apostasy! Christians have founded the Modern School; they have opened to the children of the nineteenth century opportunities of knowledge and of power more to be desired than purple robes and coronets. They need not fear the consequence of their daring; the danger lies rather in their own susceptibility to social theories from which the struggle for life has expelled all thoughts of the eternal and the invisible. So long as starvation exists the Christian thinker should both pray and plan that all may have their daily bread; he has passed for ever, let us hope, the stage in which he will acquiesce in any evil as beyond the reach of human energy and ingenuity; and he will never again expect a heaven from any source except the love that moves the stars and ought to move the earth. He will combine the mind of Christ with the logic of science for the discovery of nobler social forms; and just as he

hopes to convert the circumambient energies of the globe into messengers and servants, so will he strive serenely to realize the thoughts of Jesus in a community where the chief servant is the sovereign centre of a beneficent activity, and the common weal is all men's joy.

Never, though, will he become the apostle of mere self-salvation. If he does, the voice of Christ will die away upon his lips. Self-salvation, when transfigured by brotherly affection, is the highest reach of the carnal mind; it passes then to mutual help. But only when tempered by the mind of Jesus Christ and replenished continually by the Spirit of Immortal Love can it furnish those miracles of self-denying energy by which the children of men can be rescued from the stubborn inhumanity of man. Wesley would indeed rejoice at the awakened Christian conscience of our time; none of the heroes of the eighteenth century was more sensitive than he to social misery. He would confront and conquer the problems of our epoch in all their aspects, material and spiritual; but he would do it as he confronted the problems of his own age, and as Christ confronted the problems of all the ages—with a company of believers to whom all things are possible, even the reshaping of the social world and the redemption of humanity. Of these it will remain eternally true that they are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

